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VICTORIAN
CINDERELLA

The Story of Harriet

Beecher Stowe

THE STORY OF
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
VICTORIAN
CINDERELLA

BY PHYLLIS WYNN JACKSON

PORTRAITS BY ELLIOTT MEANS



HOLIDAY HOUSE

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TO MY
FATHER AND
MOTHER

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Part I

AN ODD
LITTLE
GIRL

1822-1824



PART I

A N O D D

L I T T L E

G I R L

1822-1824

I

SPRING had come at last to New England. The sunshine was warm, flowers bloomed in the meadows, and lilacs scented the door-yards of Litchfield village. From an upper window of the big, shabby old parsonage, Hattie Beecher could see the pale green of new leaves dancing and glinting in the sun, and she found it hard to keep her eyes on the book in her lap. But this was Saturday, and the catechism must be learned for tomorrow.

Although she was not quite eleven, Hattie recited catechism with the older children. It was not easy to keep up with them, especially Edward, who was twenty and an honor student at Yale, but she could do it if she tried.

Resolutely she turned away from the window, and began reciting: "For they that are effectively—no, that's wrong—effect-u-ally called, do in this life partake of Justification, Sanctification, and—"

There was a sudden uproar on the stairs, the clump of boys' boots, and a jumble of excited voices: "There must be four rods—" "No, Will broke his." "Bring me my boots!" "Hurry up, Ned. Last one downstairs has to dig the worms!"

Hattie dropped her book and ran out into the hall. "Papa, are you going fishing? May I go?"

"No, no, Hattie. This is a boys' expedition. Little girls must stay home and help their mothers." Dr. Lyman Beecher's voice was gay and vibrant. He was as excited over the fishing trip as any of his sons.

Hattie ran after him, clutching at his flying coat tails.

"Papa, you promised! You said anybody that piled a cord of wood that morning could go fishing, and I did. I piled more than George. Don't you remember?"

"I know, child, but today we're going clear to Mill Creek. Too far for you to walk."

"Oh, Papa! I'm strong. I can walk ever so far. Please, Papa! If you'll take me, I'll—I'll even dig the worms."

"No use teasing, Hattie. I said no, and that's final."

Hattie's thin little shoulders drooped. Tears filled her eyes and overflowed.

Her father saw them, and said sternly, "Harriet! No tears, now! You know our rule: Obedience with a smile, always!"

"But, Papa, you promised."

"I always keep my promises. Just wait. Before long I'll

take another fishing trip, then you and Henry Ward can go, and Charley, too, if he's able. Come, now. Let's see that smile."

He gently grasped her shoulders and turned her toward him, peering into her downcast face until she managed a feeble smile, and wiped her eyes on a corner of her blue-checked pinafore.

"Then Henry Ward isn't going, either?" That helped some.

"No, indeed. He's been shirking his chores lately, and is sadly behind with his lessons. He's a disgrace to the name of Beecher. Hattie, I wish you'd hear him through his Latin today."

"I try to help him, Papa. All the time I do. But he just can't get Latin."

"He must, or he can't enter college. I wish he'd been born with your brains, Hattie. But between the two of us, maybe we'll make something out of the lad yet. Eh, Hattie?" He gave her a comradely pat on the back, and hastened down the hall, shouting, "Will, have you found those boots yet?" Then, from the storeroom, "Why, here they are, lad. If they'd been a snake they'd have bitten you!"

Hattie returned dejectedly to her catechism. It was awkward being only eleven, and a girl. Too young to share the fun of the older children, but old enough to mother the younger ones. She adored her two small brothers, but they were a sore trial at times.

Charles was only six. He was a sweet-tempered child, but was always getting hurt, and coming to Hattie for sym-

pathy and bandages. Just now he had a badly infected knee from falling on a rusty nail, and required constant attention. Henry Ward, two years younger than Hattie, was even more of a problem. He was a plump, jolly youngster, full of pranks, but was slow in school and quite irresponsible. Worse still for a future minister, he was thick-tongued, and had never outgrown his childish lisp.

The older children, George, Mary, Edward, William and Kate, were quite grown up. Kate, the eldest, was twenty-two. They took scant notice of their odd, shy little sister. Nor did Hattie get much attention from her busy step-mother, a handsome, stately woman who for the past five years had presided over the noisy, crowded household. The neighbors had been right when they predicted that the new Mrs. Beecher would have her hands full with *that* family.

When the commotion of the fishing party had died away, Hattie had a quiet moment for study. But soon there was a rap on the door, and the voice of Holly, the young Negro helper, calling, "Miss Hattie, your Ma say for you to look after little Charley now. I done carried him up to the new garret. She say, whatever you do, don't let him set foot to the floor today."

"I'll try," sighed Hattie, "but he gets awfully restless. Wonder what I can give him to play with?" For the Beecher children had no toys except those they made themselves.

"I'll fetch some sticks and a knife," offered Holly. "Let him whittle somethin'."

"If you can find some good paper, Holly, we'll make a

kite. And I'll run out to the barn and get one of the new kittens." She was longing for an excuse to go out of doors.

"Yes, Miss Hattie," grinned Holly. "I know where-at there's a fine, stout string, too." The Negro sped away, whistling a jig tune.

"What would we do without Holly?" she thought. "He's always so cheerful and good to us children. If anybody deserves to get to Heaven, it's Holly, even if he is a Baptist."

Holly was not a slave, of course, but a "bound boy"—bound out to work for board and keep until he came of age, as was the custom then for the younger members of poor families, both black and white. Holly's time would soon be up, when he would be free to go where he liked, and work for wages, but to the Beechers he seemed almost like one of the family. He was a devout Negro, with an education above the average, and Dr. Beecher thought he should take up preaching.

Hattie skipped gaily out into the sunshine of the noisy barnyard. The Beechers' four acres were swarming with life—cats, dogs, chickens, the sow with her litter, the cow with her calf, and fat old Dobbin, the horse, who pulled the family carryall.

Of all the animals, Hattie was fondest of the cats. The wise old mother cat persistently made her nest in a box of discarded sermons in the parson's study, from which she would periodically emerge, leading a procession of well-trained, theological kittens. When one died, it was given an elaborate funeral, with Hattie as chief mourner, and Kate to write an epitaph for the wooden marker.

The kittens now lived in the remnants of an old barn, which had come loose from its foundation one day, and slid down the hill with much cracking of timbers, to wind up in the far corner of the lot. There the disgusted Dr. Beecher said it could stay till it rotted. It made a fine summer playhouse for the children, while in winter they were blessed with two garrets—the old one, and the one over the new wing. The new garret was a favorite spot, for there they could keep their little treasures, and make things without being obliged to clear up the muss.

Henry Ward was in the barnyard playing with Trip, the dog. As Hattie came near she eyed him severely.

"Henry Ward Beecher! You've gone and busted out your pantaloons again. Better come in and let me sew you up before Mama sees you. How *can* you be so hard on your clothes?"

"Can't help it," replied Henry cheerfully. "My old britcheth are all too tight. But I don't want to go in, 'cauth Mama'll make me do my knittin'."

"I'll do your knitting if you'll help me amuse Charley," bargained Hattie. "Haven't you finished those suspenders yet?"

"No," grumbled Henry, as they started toward the house, "I keep makin' mithtaketh, and have to ravel 'em out."

In that busy household, which included ten Beechers, four boarders, and usually some visiting relatives, besides the "help," each one had his tasks to perform. Small boys were expected to knit their own suspenders, and sometimes socks and mittens. But poor Henry's chubby fingers

were clumsy, and his spirit rebellious, so Hattie, who was an expert knitter, often completed his weekly stint as well as her own.

Two hours later the boys had nearly finished a kite, and Hattie had mended the torn trousers and made some progress with the suspenders. Also, she had persuaded Henry Ward to stumble through his Latin lesson, and was patiently trying to explain grammatical cases.

"Now in Latin there are six cases; in English only three."

"Three'th too many for me," muttered Henry.

"You don't even know English grammar. Now, listen! There's Nominative, Possessive and Objective. Decline the pronoun *he*."

"He, him, him."

"Possessive *him*? Think, Henry. You can't say *him* book."

"Why not?" grinned Henry.

"We say, *his* book. Nobody ever says, *him* book."

"They do, too. *Hymn book* ith what you take to church to thing thongth out of." The two boys laughed uproariously at the pun, and Hattie couldn't help giggling a little.

"Henry Ward, won't you ever be serious?" she scolded. "If you can't get Latin, how do you expect to be a minister when you grow up?"

"I don't. I want to be a thailor, like Uncle Thamuel."

"But you can't, Henry. You know all Papa's boys have to be ministers."

"Well, the rest of 'em can, but not me!"

Little Charles, weary of kite-making, piped up gleefully, "If Henry don't have to be a minister, then I don't either."

Here was mutiny beyond Hattie's power to quell, but she felt sure Papa could handle it when the time came.

"You'll find out!" she prophesied darkly. "Henry Ward, you ought to be ashamed. You're a disgrace to the name of Beecher. Papa says so."

Henry, who was at heart very sensitive, looked sober. "Honest, Hattie, I couldn't ever be a minister, even if I wanted to. Why, I can't even talk plain, and I'm—I'm juth thtupid! Nobody loveth me much, I reckon."

His sister heard the quiver in his voice, and was instantly sympathetic. "You know I love you, Henry, and so does Papa, and all of us. You're not *really* stupid, you just don't try to learn things you don't like. Why, you know more about woods things than anybody. You know where everything grows, and about little animals, and you can make the *best* willow whistles—"

"I'm not thmart enough to write a thermon, though," put in Henry gloomily.

"You wouldn't have to write your sermons. There's loads already written. Papa has barrellfuls that he never uses. But anyhow, you ought to work harder at your Latin. Now the six cases—"

"I wish you'd been a boy, Hattie," he interrupted, hoping to avoid the painful topic. "Then you could write my ther-month for me."

"I wish so, too. But I s'pose I'll just be a minister's wife."

"That's about all a girl can do," agreed Henry, with masculine superiority. "Or else be a teacher, like Mary and Kate."

"I guess Kate'd rather get married," mused Hattie. "Wonder what this Professor Fisher will be like."

Kate had taught school in New London the previous winter, and had become engaged to a distinguished young professor at Yale.

"Isn't he ever goin' to come here and visit?" asked Charles.

"Not for a long time. He's gone to Europe. My, it must be heavenly to travel, and meet great people, and see—Charley, what are you doing out of bed?" For the youngest Beecher was limping after the scampering kitten. Only after a struggle, and Hattie's promise of a story, could he be persuaded to resume his couch.

"What shall I tell?" asked the harassed little nurse. "I've told you so many stories lately I've about run out."

"Tell about our mother," suggested Henry. "About the time we ate the tulipth."

"You've heard that dozens of times," protested Hattie, but with little urging she launched into the familiar account of the time when she and Henry had found a bag of tulip bulbs in the attic, and thinking they were onions, had eaten them. The children had never been permitted to taste onions, and found the tulips disappointingly flat, but they sampled each one, until all were ruined. Their mother, Roxana Beecher, had loved flowers, and prized those imported bulbs, which had been given her, as a rare luxury. But when she discovered her loss, she had not scolded the little culprits.

"Mother wasn't angry," declared Hattie. "She just looked sad. Then she took us on her lap, and told us what we had

done, and showed us a picture of a lovely red tulip. You and I cried and cried, Henry, because we would never get to see a real, live tulip."

"I remember," nodded Henry.

"You couldn't. You were only two years old."

"Well, anyway, I remember our mother. The wath beautiful and kind to everybody, and the played the guitar and thang to uth."

"I wish she was here now," said Charles plaintively.

"Me, too." Henry's voice was choked.

"Papa says she was a saint on earth, and now she's a bright angel in heaven, watching over us always." Hattie was not far from tears, but she took comfort in this thought.

Although she was seldom alone, Hattie was a lonely child. She had no one to confide in, no one to give her the affection she craved. Her father loved all his children, but she had always felt that he loved the boys best. Boys could be of more use in the world. So she took refuge in thoughts of her mother. If only Roxana had lived, how different life would have been for them all! The family often spoke of her, keeping her memory alive, a vital influence in the home.

The three children remained silent a moment, but the mercurial Beecher temperament would not stay down. Charles spoke first.

"Read to us, Hattie."

She really thought they should get back to the Latin, but the boys shouted loud protests.

"I tell you what!" cried Henry. "Read a thtory out of the—you know—that book you found."

"I don't know if I dare." Hattie lowered her voice. "Charley's so little, he might give us away."

"No, he won't," whispered Henry. "I'll 'thplain to him about it. Go get the book, wherever you got it hid."

Storybooks were forbidden to the Beecher children, and indeed, in that year of 1822, very few children's books existed. Novels, even for grown-ups, were frowned upon by Calvinist churchmen of New England. Dr. Beecher had never read a whole novel, and never intended to, although he was soon to alter his views on that matter. But he permitted the children to read Cotton Mather's *Magnalia*, because the author had been a famous Colonial clergyman. The book-hungry Beechers read it, but were more impressed by the gruesome tales of the Salem witches than by the historical information it contained. Even these soon lost their savor, and Hattie searched constantly for something new to read.

She rummaged through barrels stuffed with old sermons and tracts, and many of these she read carefully, despite their weighty dullness. But recently she had found a rare treasure—a real storybook! She suspected it had been her mother's. The title was *Arabian Nights*. She and Henry had devoured it in secret, and now Charles was allowed to share their delight in these fabulous tales of the Orient.

He was thrilled by the story of Aladdin's lamp, but declared loyally, "Hattie, I like some of the stories you make up just as well."

"When I'm grown up," she announced, "I mean to give my children all sorts of storybooks. Thousands of 'em!"

"I bet there ain't that many in the world," said Henry.
"Then I'll write some myself."

She was reading *Sinbad the Sailor*, by request, when they were startled by footsteps in the hall.

"Hide the book, quick!" whispered Henry, as he grabbed his Latin Grammar and opened it upside-down. Hattie slipped *Arabian Nights* under her apron, and began knitting furiously. Charles pretended to be asleep. The door opened, and there stood Mrs. Beecher, scanning the trio with a critical eye.

She was a tall, handsome woman, with smooth auburn hair and a skin of dazzling fairness. She moved with dignity, seldom smiled, and no one had ever seen her with hair or temper ruffled—so very unlike the haphazard, emotional Beechers. She never descended to outright scolding, but she meted out punishments with a firm, just hand. The children admired and respected her, but she was not the sort of person they could love. She spoke in a cool, even voice.

"Harriet, I see you are doing Henry Ward's knitting for him again. I'm sure you mean well, but I must forbid it. The boy will have no character if you indulge him in his idleness. Let me see those suspenders."

"I—I juth dwopped thome thtitcheth, and Hattie'th pickin' 'em up for me," Henry explained, his lisp growing worse, as it always did in moments of stress.

Mrs. Beecher examined the knitted band, measuring it with her eye. "No, Henry, you simply have not been working. You knew it was to be finished this week, didn't you?"

"Yeth'm."

"And you know you are to be punished for not completing your tasks promptly. Don't you?"

"Yeth'm."

"Very well. But that must wait. Children, we are going to have company. Your uncle Samuel Foote is coming for a visit."

The children shouted with delight. Hattie jumped up, clapping her hands, and the forgotten book fell to the floor with a bang. But Henry quickly sat upon it, and in the general confusion it escaped Mrs. Beecher's notice.

"Yes, he's back from sea," she went on, "and will be here tomorrow. I dislike having guests on the Sabbath, especially those who don't take part in our religious observance, but we must show what hospitality we can."

Seafaring Captain Foote, their mother's brother, was a fascinating figure to the provincial Beechers, and his infrequent visits were great events.

"Maybe he'll bring uth thomething," cried Henry, even in his excitement remembering to keep the forbidden book covered.

"That is a selfish thought," reproved his stepmother. "You had better be thinking how to make your uncle's visit pleasant. Not what you may get in this world, but what you can give. 'It is more blessed—' "

"He always brings home a shipload of pretty things for Grandmother Foote," interrupted Hattie. "Now we'll hear some real, true stories about strange people, and far-off places. It'll be just heavenly!"

"Harriet," admonished Mrs. Beecher, "*heavenly* is not

a word to use in speaking of worldly things. Go fetch me a pair of the good sheets and pillow cases from the lavender chest. Henry, take that kitten back where it belongs." She stopped in the doorway. "And we won't forget your punishment, after your uncle goes."

Henry was quite sure they wouldn't.

"I'm not thcared—much," he declared stoutly to sympathetic Charles. "Punithmenth are never tho bad when they've been thaved up over Thunday. But all the thame, I hope Uncle won't leave for a long, long time!"

I I

SUNDAY dawned warm and clear. Hattie bounced out of bed, remembering happily that today Uncle Samuel was coming. He was not only her dear mother's brother, but her favorite relative—kind and witty and wise. He had been everywhere, and could tell about everything from strange sea animals to the games played by children in foreign lands. Best of all, he could tell about Mother when she was a girl. There was nobody like him.

She started to sing as she laid out her clean clothing, then stopped abruptly, remembering what day it was. Mama was strict about Sabbath conduct. It was too much to hope that Uncle's coming would release any Beecher from attending all three church services, but maybe Papa would cut his sermons short. Morning and evening services weren't at all bad. You could carry a few fragrant posies, like

clove-pinks or roses, to smell during the two-hour sermon; or, in the dullest moments, read the hymn book. But during the afternoon service it was terribly hard to stay awake.

Hattie sighed as she took down the old brown merino dress, made over from one of Mary's, as were most of her clothes. How she wished for something new and pretty and spring-like to wear on this important day. But last summer's dresses would be too small by now, anyway, so she had to be content with giving her shoes an extra brushing, and tying back her brown curls with a bit of apple-green ribbon. These small efforts at adornment almost made her late for family prayers, and Mrs. Beecher frowned at her as she scuttled to her place.

Throughout the morning service Hattie fidgeted, fearful lest her uncle might arrive during their absence. As a rule she listened carefully to the sermon. Although she could not understand her father's learned discourses on theological doctrine, she loved to hear the big, splendid words like "predestination" and "foreordination" roll from his tongue. Then when he came to the "rousings," those eloquent outbursts by which he could sway the emotions of his hearers at will, Hattie's heart beat fast, and she was sure Papa was the finest orator in the world.

It was Lyman Beecher's habit to begin by reading quietly from notes, then suddenly toss them aside, sweep his spectacles up onto his high forehead, rumple his unruly shock of graying hair, and launch into an earnest exhortation on some topic close to home. Sometimes this was meant to rouse the dozing members of his congregation, which it al-

ways did, but often it came from the heart, and he shed real tears. When the storm was spent, he would pull from his pocket another of his countless pairs of spectacles, and resume the reading. The whole proceeding might be repeated several times, the spectacles collecting on his ruddy brow.

But this morning there was only one such stranded pair on his forehead when he pronounced the benediction—proof that the sermon had been shorter than usual. The Beechers hurried home, but the guest had not arrived. Dinner was served and eaten, and still no Uncle Samuel. When it was time for the afternoon service, Hattie's stepmother called her aside.

"I don't like to disrupt our Sabbath routine," she said, "but your father thinks it best for you to remain at home now. It would seem inhospitable if your uncle should find no one here to greet him."

Hattie tried not to look as elated as she felt.

"You have spent so much time with your mother's people," went on Mrs. Beecher encouragingly, "that you won't feel shy with your uncle, I'm sure. Stay indoors, now, and remember your Sabbath manners."

They were gone. Hattie revelled in the unaccustomed quiet of the house, and the thought that her time was her own, to do with as she liked—within Sunday limits. It was nice just to sit in the parlor, opened only on Sundays or for visitors, and listen to the swallows in the chimney, or day-dream. She sat on the hard, slippery sofa, but the worn spots pricked her knees. Recklessly she put her feet up on it, and in a moment was sound asleep.

She was aroused by the clang of the brass knocker, and a big voice booming, "Hallo, there, Beechers!" She ran to the door, and was lost in her uncle's hearty embrace.

"My favorite niece!" shouted Captain Foote. "Let me have a look at you. Grown out of all knowledge, and thinner than any child has a right to be. Why, Hattie, you're all eyes! Are they working you too hard?"

"Oh, no, Uncle. I'm very strong, really! I can pile as much wood as any of the boys, almost."

"I didn't realize you were such a big girl now. I'm afraid the little present I brought you won't be very suitable."

"Oh, what, Uncle Samuel?"

"A doll-baby, carved from wood, with a Chinese costume. But if you're too old for dolls, maybe—"

"No, I'm not. I've always wanted a doll-baby. One I didn't make myself out of rags." That was true, she thought, only she would rather have had a book.

"Where is everybody?" asked her uncle, adding, "At church, of course. I've almost forgotten the New England customs. Suppose you tell me all about everything."

Hattie was not shy or quiet with Uncle Samuel. Her tongue flew, her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled, making her almost pretty. There was so much to talk about while she had him all to herself. He plied her with questions.

"Is your father well?"

"Oh, no. About every other week he thinks he's dying, but the doctor says it's only nervous indigestion."

"No richer than he used to be, I suppose?"

"No, we're poor as churchmice, but Papa's busy fighting

the Devil and the other denominations, and doesn't mind. Last winter he needed a new overcoat just awfully, but when he finally got ahold of enough money, and went to buy it, he stopped in at the missionary meeting, and gave all his coat money to the heathen."

Samuel laughed. "What did your stepmother say?"

"She said it was a mercy he didn't take off his old coat, too, and put it in the missionary barrel—only any self-respecting heathen would be ashamed to wear it."

"And what is Edward doing?"

"Ned? He's in his last year at Yale, but he walks home weekends. It's only twenty miles."

"Why does he do that?"

"I guess it's so he can carry back enough food to last him through the week. Ned's smart. He got 'lected to Phi Beta Kappa, but nobody can tell it, 'cause he hasn't any watch-and-chain to hang his key onto."

"What about George? Let's see . . . how old is he now?"

"He's going on sixteen, and he's agonizing."

"He's what?"

"Agonizing. Praying for grace."

"Who is Grace?" Uncle Samuel's eyes twinkled.

"Oh, Uncle!" giggled Hattie. "*You* know. Praying for his soul's salvation. It's awfully hard work. He prays loud enough, but it doesn't seem to help any. He said his knees got pretty sore the first week, but they're sort of calloused now."

"I don't know much about those things, not being a Congregationalist," smiled her uncle, "but I hope grace will de-

scend upon the poor lad soon. Is he planning to be a minister?"

"Oh, yes, they all are, except Henry Ward. He wants to be a sailor, like you."

"I never dreamed I was such a bad influence."

Hattie was not always sure when Uncle was joking, but she said earnestly, "You couldn't ever be anything bad, Uncle. It's just 'cause Henry can't talk plain, and doesn't like Latin or sermons. He won't listen when I read sermons to him, only one: *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*."

"For pity's sake, Hattie, is that all you can find to read to your little brothers?" Samuel had forgotten that the Beechers' reading matter was restricted.

"Just about." She almost told him about *Arabian Nights*, but decided not to. "Oh, sermons aren't so bad—some of 'em," she rattled on cheerfully. "One I like is called *An Appeal on the Unlawfulness of a Man's Marrying His Wife's Sister*. Then there's the *Magnalia*. It tells how to know a witch when you see her, and what to do with her. Papa says that book is very instructive."

Samuel Foote chuckled. "You're an odd child, Hattie. Not much like your mother."

Hattie's radiant mood vanished. "I guess I *am* odd. Everybody says so. I don't suppose I'll ever amount to much, but I do so wish I could grow up to be like my mother. Tell me about her, Uncle Samuel. About when she was a girl."

Samuel told all he could remember of his sister Roxana, who had been witty, brilliant and talented. She read everything—fiction, poetry and science—spoke French flu-

ently, sang and played the guitar, and was skilled in needlework, drawing and painting. There was no end to the things she could do. She had been pretty and popular, but had refused to take any of her suitors seriously until she met Lyman Beecher. As Hattie listened to this recital, her spirits drooped. How could she ever become like such a wonderful person?

"We all thought Roxana had a brilliant future," said Samuel, half to himself. "She might have become a fine artist. But life defeated her."

He crossed the room to gaze thoughtfully at an oil painting of a village street scene at sunset, its glowing colors seeming strangely out of place in that somber room. Hattie followed.

"I think it's beautiful!" she breathed. "But Mama says it's a very poor picture of East Hampton, 'cause the meeting-house is left out."

"I suspect Roxana did that on purpose," mused Samuel. "She was never meant to be a minister's wife." Then he added hastily, "I mean it might have made the picture too crowded, and hidden that lovely sunset."

"I see," nodded Hattie. "I guess Mama never thought of that."

"Poor Roxana! She painted this as a bride, and it was her last picture."

"Why did she stop painting, I wonder?"

"I suppose it didn't seem important any more, after the babies came. She had no leisure, was always tired, and—no, Hattie, you wouldn't understand. But remember this,

little one: if you have a talent, develop it, use it, never let it slip from you, even if you are a poor man's wife, and the mother of nine children."

Hattie was deeply impressed by her uncle's earnestness, but she couldn't help asking, "What if I haven't any talent?"

"Of course you have. Everyone has, and you should have several, as Roxana's daughter. I only hope you've inherited your father's will power and energy. Never let obstacles defeat you, Hattie. Not poverty, nor ill health, nor the fact that you are a woman. Will you remember that?"

"I'll try," she murmured humbly.

"Life deprived your mother of many things, but she had one priceless gift, which outshone all the others. I hope her children will have it, too. It was the spirit of loving kindness."

All too soon the family returned, and there ensued a hubbub of noisy greetings, gay quips and laughter—very unseemly for the Sabbath, it appeared to Mrs. Beecher. As soon as possible she marshalled the young people into Dr. Beecher's study.

"I beg you to excuse us, Captain Foote," she said primly. "This is the hour for reciting the catechism. Dr. Beecher was detained by a deacons' meeting, but he will be home shortly." Then, as Hattie lingered by the door, she added with a touch of pride, "Harriet is quite advanced for her years. She now recites catechism with the older ones."

"Do you want to hear me?" cried Hattie, and began rapidly: "They that are effectually called do in this life

partake of Justification, Sanctification and Adoption, and the several benefits which do either accompany or flow from them."

"Very good," smiled her uncle. "But just what do those words mean? Justification, Sanctification, and whatever it was?"

Mrs. Beecher hastened to speechless Hattie's rescue. "Why trouble the child, Samuel? Of course she doesn't know all the meanings yet, but they will come as she grows older."

"I see. You make a nest of her memory, and put in words, like eggs, for future hatching."

"An apt comparison," retorted Mrs. Beecher with an icy smile. "Good words, like eggs, do not hatch at once. We must wait."

"But meanwhile, aren't you running great risk of their going bad?"

"Not these words!" replied Mrs. Beecher firmly. "They are always in a state of perfect preservation."

"Indeed?" teased Samuel. "That must be because they are so dry!"

Mrs. Beecher had had quite enough of this discussion. "Come, Harriet. No loitering on the Lord's Day!" And with head high, she beat a dignified retreat.

"It's all right, child," said Samuel, his hand on Hattie's shoulder. "I was only teasing her. You go ahead and train your memory on all sorts of things."

"I do. I know thirty hymns by heart, and yards of poetry. Milton and Byron, but I love Byron best of all."

Captain Foote stared after his niece in amazement. These Puritans, he thought, forbade their children storybooks, and yet gave them *Magnalia* witchcraft and Byron's poems to read! No wonder Hattie was an odd child. "Old head on young shoulders," he quoted to himself. Many great men had started life that way. Too bad she was born a girl!

BUT LIFE in the Litchfield parsonage was by no means all work and severity. Even Sunday had its gayer moments. The early Puritans had observed the Sabbath from sundown on Saturday until the first evening star on Sunday. This custom was now out-moded, but it suited the high-strung Lyman Beecher. After delivering three fiery sermons, he felt the need of "running down," as he said. The children were permitted to stay up late, and share in this hilarious process.

After the evening service, off would come the long-tailed coat and shoes, down from the wall the old violin, and the parson would saw his way through a limited repertoire, much to the enjoyment of his young audience. He could sometimes be persuaded to execute a double shuffle or a bit of the hornpipe while he fiddled, but he discouraged the children from trying to imitate him. It was too hard on socks and carpets.

This Sunday evening, with Uncle Samuel there, was a gala occasion. The Beechers all gathered in the parlor, the boys carrying in chairs from the kitchen, while Hattie sat on a low stool in the corner nearest her uncle.

"What did you think of my temperance sermon, Sam?" shouted Dr. Beecher in high good humor. "Didn't I take a pretty good crack at the drunkards?"

"You really heaped it on, Father," approved Ned. "You had 'em squirming all over the meetinghouse."

"Old Lafe Peabody turned as red as a turkey gobbler," laughed Will. "Did you notice him, Papa?"

"Did I *notice* him!" snorted Dr. Beecher. "Son, what do you think I'm doing when I take off my reading specs? I can spot spiritual anxiety clear to the back pews."

"It was a powerful discourse, Lyman," answered Samuel, as soon as he could get in a word.

"Ah, I've written five others, just as good, and had 'em published, too," chuckled the parson. "We'll make Connecticut a temperance state yet—except on holidays, of course. Reminds me—how'd you like a hot toddy right now, Sam?"

"No, thank you, Lyman. I never drink alone. I'm bound to say, though, the so-called infidels have it all over the Christians in some respects. In all my travels, I've never seen a drunken Mohammedan."

Mrs. Beecher rose abruptly. "I must ask you to excuse me, Captain. I always spend this hour in meditation. When you wish to retire, Kate will show you to your room. Good night. Mr. Beecher, I do hope you will spare your socks this one evening, at least."

Captain Foote rose gallantly and bowed the lady from the room. Then, turning to his brother-in-law, he asked, "What was that about your socks, Lyman?"

The children explained the Sunday evening fiddling, and their father's habit of jigging in his stocking feet.

"Great!" exclaimed Samuel. "Get out your fiddle right now, Lyman. This will be like old times."

Lyman needed no urging. "I never was any great shakes as a fiddler," he said, while coaxing the old violin into tune, "but this is my one vice, and I cling to it. Now, what'll you have?"

His listeners called for their favorite tunes, from Scotch ballads to rollicking jigs like *Money Musk* and *Leather Breeches*. The boys especially liked one with the unsanctified title, *Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself*. What Lyman lacked in skill was more than made up for in spirit. He played with mounting fervor, his face flushed, hair wildly on end, and one foot patting out the rhythm.

At last he paused to rest. "Sam, I'll bet you can do the sailor's hornpipe like it ought to be done. Let's see it."

"I know how it goes right enough," said Samuel, "but as for doing it—no, I'm built a bit too broad in the beam."

But he could not long resist the children's pleas. His performance was such a success he was forced to repeat it, throwing in a bit of an Irish jig and a Highland fling for good measure. Then he dropped into his chair, and mopped his brow.

"Didn't know I had it in me," he panted, adding hastily, as the children called for more, "But wouldn't you like to see what I've brought in my saddle-bags?"

Of course they would. They had been bursting with curiosity. So amid the delighted cries of the family, Samuel's

treasures were brought out, explained, marvelled at, and distributed. There were trinkets and curios from many lands—strange, lovely sea shells, starfish and branches of coral, odd coins, ingots of Peruvian silver and relics of the Incas. These the children proudly arranged on the what-not in the corner. Then there were Turkish slippers, Chinese joss sticks, preserved ginger root and lichee nuts, India muslins for the girls' dresses, and a length of fine Canton silk for Mrs. Beecher. Hattie adored her wooden doll.

This excitement over, Dr. Beecher settled himself in his chair and said, "Now, Sam, what about your voyage? Spin us a yarn."

Captain Foote's long voyage had been full of mishaps: storms, epidemics and attacks by pirates. "And finally," he concluded, "on the trip home we were rammed by a slaver one dark night just off Havana, and had to lay up there a week for repairs. I enjoyed the Spanish music, though. Reminded me of Roxana, and her guitar."

In the reverent silence which always followed the mention of that beloved name, Hattie ventured to ask, "What's a slaver?"

"It's a ship carrying captured Africans to be sold as slaves. I boarded her, and saw with my own eyes things I've heard about, but couldn't quite believe. Those poor black creatures were chained down in the hold, where it was dark and foul, and so cramped they couldn't stand upright. Many were sick, and the captain had tossed the worst cases overboard. All through the ship I could hear

them crying and moaning. Ugh! I shall never get the stench of that slaver out of my nostrils!"

"Was that ship bound for this country?" cried Kate, aghast.

"No, those Negroes were going to the Cuban sugar plantations. I saw those places, too, and conditions there are even worse. Remember, Lyman, how sister Mary used to describe it? The awful heat, the brutal overseers laying on the bloody lash, until the slaves dropped? It's all true, and it's a disgrace to humanity."

Beautiful Mary Foote Hubbard had been a tragic figure. An unhappy marriage to a gentleman of Cuba, and two wretched years there on her husband's plantation, had brought her back, broken in health and spirit, to die in the arms of her sister, Roxana Beecher.

"As a child," said Kate, "I often heard Aunt Mary tell of sitting alone in the tropical darkness, listening to the wails and groans of the tortured slaves, and praying that the island, with its load of sin and misery, might sink beneath the sea, and she with it."

"Ah, yēs," sighed Lyman. "Those things preyed on her mind. We may be sure slavery was the real cause of poor Mary's death."

Hattie's sensitive little face had taken on a look of horror and sadness. Her ready sympathy, which made her grieve deeply over a sick kitten, was fully roused.

"Uncle, why do men do such cruel things?" she burst out. "Can't anybody stop them?"

"Hush, Hattie!" chided Kate, who believed children

should never interrupt their elders with unanswerable questions. Slavery, she thought, was nothing new, that Hattie should be so upset over it.

But Samuel answered her gravely. "It's selfishness and greed, child—greed for gold—that causes most of the wrong in this old world."

"Yes, the Devil's always busy," agreed Lyman, "but he's losing ground. Why, slavery was legal right here in Connecticut not many years ago. Some day it will be stamped out all over the world; but all in the Lord's good time."

"The Lord's methods are too slow," objected Samuel. "We ought to be doing more about it. Now if I had a pulpit, like you, I'd—"

"I do sometimes mention slavery in my sermons," said Lyman defensively, "and I remember oppressed Africa in my daily prayers. But you can't mix politics and religion, and slavery's a political issue."

"Looks as if Mason and Dixon and Henry Clay have pretty well settled it from that angle," said Edward.

Samuel looked puzzled. "I've been out of touch with home politics for so long, I can't just recall—"

All talking at once, the Beechers explained the importance of the line recently surveyed by Mason and Dixon, separating the slave-holding states from the free. The two sections now had equal power in Congress, and everybody was satisfied.

"The compromise really favors the North, though," added Will, "because most of the land is north of the line. New states will be free states."

"But that's only the land of the Louisiana Purchase," argued Lyman. "What if the South gets more territory to the south and west?"

"That's right. There's Texas, a good cotton-growing country," mused Samuel. "It could be carved up into more states than New England. No, I doubt if the slavery question is settled yet."

"Well, Sam, that proves my point: slavery is a political issue," declared Lyman. "Nobody denies the moral injustice of it, so what good can preaching do? No, I feel I can best hasten the Millennium by fighting such evils as drunkenness and false doctrines here at home."

This was to be Lyman Beecher's viewpoint for many years, until the controversy grew too bitter to be ignored, and ruined his career. Even then, he was never radical. During the 1820's, this passive attitude was held by most thoughtful, stay-at-home Yankees, to whom slavery seemed as remote as a typhoon in the China Sea, and as far beyond their control. "The peculiar institution," as the newspapers called it, was greatly to be condemned, but what could anyone do about it?

But a tall, raw-boned youth from the western wilderness was soon to view a New Orleans slave auction, and say grimly, "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard!" And in a New England parlor, an odd little girl with great, sad eyes sat listening, visioning and grieving over things she had never seen. These two would one day find a way to do something about it.

I I I

NEXT DAY Hattie called on Aunt Esther, to tell her about Uncle Samuel's visit, and, if possible, to borrow more of Byron's poems to memorize.

Aunt Esther Beecher was her father's sister—a sharp-eyed, precise little spinster of thirty-odd, with a positive horror of untidiness and dirt. She lived in a neat cottage close by, and was always sent for in time of trouble, or to take charge of the Beecher children during their parents' absence. On such occasions the poor lady nearly wore herself out, trying to manage that lively brood and keep spotless order. Much as she loved her nieces and nephews, she often declared she felt like killing half a score of 'em!

Although Auntie was a little trying to live with, Hattie was very fond of her. She was the best of nurses for a sick child, and a very wise person. All by herself she had studied Botany and Chemistry, new sciences then, and knew the names of all the birds and plants. Each summer, with Hattie's help, she gathered the medicinal herbs called "simples," which every family used: catnip, boneset, tansy, and pennyroyal. These, made into a bitter brew, were supposed to be good for colds, colic, chills and ague, and other common ills. Hattie liked to help gather them, along with the seasoning herbs like sage and thyme, tie them in neat bunches, and hang them from the attic rafters to dry. But the medicine was terrible! The only good kind was tea

made from sassafras root, which Auntie always gave her in the spring, "to thin the blood," as she said.

It had been Aunt Esther who, when Hattie came begging for something to read, had introduced her to the poetry of Byron. She had doubted that the child could get much out of it, but hoped to keep her out of mischief for an hour or two. However, the good lady did not know her niece. Hattie had an instinctive feeling for poetry, although her acquaintance with it had previously been limited to Milton and the stanzas in the hymn book. Byron's poetry, so different and fascinating, had opened up a new world of loveliness. Thrilling to the magical sound of the words, Hattie had quickly learned many of the verses by heart, and was always demanding more.

Today, sitting in the low cherry rocker, with chips under her heels to catch the dirt, and a napkin in her lap to catch crumbs, Hattie carefully nibbled a cookie, and told Aunt Esther all the news. Then she was allowed to take down a volume of Byron, and lose herself in the music of the lyrics, while her aunt knitted.

"Auntie," she asked, looking up from the book, "what does it mean—'one I never loved enough to hate'?"

"Oh, don't ask *me*, child. That's just one of Byron's strong expressions."

At that time a Byron craze was sweeping the country. Everybody read Byron—even Lyman Beecher, who was forced to admit that a few of the Biblical pieces, like *The Song of Saul* and *The Destruction of Sennacherib*, were very fine, though not to be compared with Milton. It may

have been that the poet's romantic and irregular life lent fascination to his writings, but no one denied their value as literature. Young people read Byron as eagerly as those of today listen to their favorites of screen and radio, and pounced on every scrap of information about his doings. The Byron cult included even sedate maiden ladies like Esther Beecher, and now Hattie had joined the ranks. The poet was her secret idol, and she dreamed of seeing him, perhaps speaking to him, some far-off day.

She tripped home that afternoon in uplifted mood, with a prized volume of Byron tucked carefully under her arm.

But while Hattie wept happily over the poetic tale of suffering and wrong in *The Prisoner of Chillon*, real tragedy struck the Beecher household. At the time it touched Hattie lightly, but its results were far-reaching, and were to alter the course of her whole life.

Dr. Beecher returned from the village one morning with a letter for Kate. She seized upon it eagerly.

"Oh, it's from my prospective father-in-law," she cried, and smiling happily, broke the seal. But as she read, the smile faded, and her face went very white. Without a word she handed the letter to her father, and left the room.

The sailing vessel *Albion*, bearing Professor Fisher, Kate's betrothed, had gone down off the Irish coast, and there had been but one survivor. Alexander Fisher had died bravely, helping and cheering his companions to the last.

Hattie and Henry Ward came in from the meadow to find the house strangely hushed. Mrs. Beecher told them the sad news.

"Kate is in the parlor with your father," she concluded. "Keep very quiet, and don't disturb them. I'm afraid your poor sister is taking it extremely hard."

With awed faces, the two children tiptoed to the closed door of the parlor, and listened. Kate was sobbing hysterically, and their father was talking. His voice, choked with sorrow, went on and on. The children huddled together on the lower step of the stair, and cried quietly in sympathy.

"Poor Kate!" mourned Hattie. "She was always so jolly and happy. Now she'll have to be an old-maid teacher all her life, and never be happy again!"

"We won't ever get to thee her Profethor now," sniffed Henry, wiping his nose on his sleeve.

"Here, take my kerchief," said Hattie. "I do wish there was something we could do for Kate, but I guess there isn't. Let's go outside."

A pall of sadness hung over the house all day, and at the supper table, Kate's place was empty.

"I'll send Holly up with a bowl of soup," said Mrs. Beecher. "The poor girl hasn't eaten a morsel today."

"Your sister is packing to go away," Dr. Beecher informed them. "She's going to Franklin to stay for a time with young Fisher's parents. They want her, and it may help her, sharing this sorrow with them."

"It's a shame!" exclaimed George. "What did Fisher want to go to Europe for, just before the wedding?"

"He didn't want to go," replied Dr. Beecher. "He was sent by Yale, to buy laboratory equipment. They were forced to postpone their wedding."

"Such a brilliant young man," mourned Mrs. Beecher. "And to be taken so suddenly! Was he prepared, I wonder? Do you know, Lyman, the state of his soul?"

"Ah, that's the worst of it! We don't know. But I fear Kate has lost him in both this world and the next."

"The pity of it!" sighed his wife. "That makes the loss doubly hard to bear." The meal was finished in funereal silence.

Kate left next day, to be gone a whole long year. The children, remembering her pale, set face as she said good-bye, felt almost as if it were their sister who had died.

SOME weeks later, a large box arrived at the parsonage. It contained books which Alex Fisher, with some premonition of disaster, had willed to Kate. Dr. Beecher locked the lot in his study for private inspection. Some of them, he thought, looked suspiciously like novels.

But next day he came leaping downstairs with a copy of Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* half open in his hand. "Children," he shouted, "you must read this! I've always forbidden novels as trash, but this shows real culture—true genius! I *want* you to read all of Scott's novels!"

The youngsters needed no urging. They devoured every one, enjoying the first fiction feast of their lives. There were Scott's narrative poems, too—*Lady of the Lake* and *Marmion*—and Hattie, entranced, almost forgot to mourn the loss of their donor.

And that was not all. They soon learned that Professor

Fisher had also left Kate a legacy of *two thousand dollars*, in cash! To the Beechers, it seemed a fortune. They were accustomed to a salary of only eight hundred dollars a year, and that often in arrears, so that keeping boarders was a necessity. Of course money went much further in those days of low prices, and two thousand dollars really was, as people said, quite a tidy sum.

The children were tremendously excited. Their sister had suddenly become a mysterious and important personage. "Whatever will she do with all that money?" they asked each other. But Kate's letters gave no hint as to her plans, and soon they forgot to wonder, in the excitement of preparing for Independence Day.

All New Englanders looked forward to July the Fourth, their great new holiday. Many men were still living who had fought at Bunker Hill and Valley Forge. The guns had roared at Lexington and Concord the year Lyman Beecher was born, and he remembered well the talk over the signing of the Constitution. For older men, Independence Day held a deep and personal meaning. For the young people, while there were no firecrackers to burn their fingers, there was the grand, all-day celebration, when the whole county came to Litchfield.

In the big kitchen of the parsonage the day before, food was being prepared for the picnic dinner to be held on the village green. Brown pots of beans bubbled merrily in the brick oven, and a spicy aroma of baked ham filled the air.

George dashed in, highly elated. "I've just been at the drawings," he announced, "and I don't have to be a Red-

coat. I'm to be an Indian again. Mama, where's my costume? I'll need new feathers in my war-bonnet."

An annual feature of the celebration was the sham battle—British and Indians against Colonials. Since nobody wanted to be a Redcoat, even in fun, the men drew lots for the privilege of being on the winning side. For the Colonials, of course, always routed the Redcoats in glorious fashion. The boys all liked to be Indians, and George felt himself very lucky.

Early next morning, the bell in the meetinghouse steeple announced the muster of the Militia. The Beechers hastened through morning prayers, made a gesture of breakfast, and then the boys were off, with sixpence each for spending money, to watch the Militia units from neighboring communities march in.

"Mama," pleaded Hattie, "mayn't I go with the boys, just this once? I want to see the Militia, too. They've been marching all night, some of 'em, so as to be here in time, and they have fifes and drums. Please, Mama!"

"Go racing about in the heat and dust with a mob of rough boys?" Mrs. Beecher was horrified. "Certainly not. You may help me pack the dinner baskets, and ride with me in the carryall, like a little lady."

Hattie resigned herself to being a little lady, with no spending money. Anyway, she would wear her best sprigged muslin dress with the blue sash. It was too small for her, but maybe it wouldn't burst if she was careful.

The formal exercises were held in the meetinghouse. There were prayers, patriotic speeches, and singing. The

States had as yet no national anthem; ten years were to elapse before the words of *My Country, 'Tis of Thee* were written, and set, strangely enough, to the tune of *God Save the King*, the British national anthem. But the people of Litchfield had a hymn to suit every occasion. Today they sang:

*Let children hear the mighty deeds
Which God performed of old,
Which in our younger days we saw,
And which our fathers told.*

Hattie was very proud of Papa, sitting up there with the Governor and all the visiting dignitaries. She thought he made the finest prayer of all.

The review of troops was a splendid sight. Colonel Tallmadge, the famous veteran of the Revolution, sat bravely erect on his great white horse, the sun glinting on the brass buttons of his blue-and-buff uniform. The sham battle, too, was thrilling. But it was hard to pick out George, with his war-paint on, in all the confusion.

But to Hattie the high spot of the whole glorious day came when Colonel Tallmadge read the Declaration of Independence. She knew every line of it, but when the stirring words rang out, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," a vast pride welled up in her heart—pride in her people, her country, her New England. Yet mingled with that joyous pride, was a strange unrest—a vague longing to do something brave and great some day for her country, and for Liberty!

I V

SUMMER passed quickly, and schooldays came again. Hattie and George attended the best school in that region, Miss Pierce's Academy. Hattie was the youngest pupil there, having been admitted only by special arrangement. This, and the fact that she was not as well dressed as the other girls, made her a social misfit.

Shy Hattie did not make friends easily, but she scarcely felt the need of girl companions. At home she had her brothers and all the pets to play with, and many daily tasks to do. The lively Beechers were always busy, doing things together. There was seldom a dull moment at the parsonage.

It was really more fun at home than at school, but Hattie, being impressed with the value of an education, went willingly to the Academy, which her sisters before her had attended. Judged solely by her marks, she was not a brilliant student. She was too shy to tell all she knew; and her quick mind, rebelling at routine lessons, darted off into more pleasing by-paths. Sometimes she listened in on other recitations—Mr. Brace's English Composition was her favorite—but in fine weather she longed to be outdoors.

Autumn was lovely in New England. The wooded hills flamed in scarlet, russet and gold, mingled with the dark green of pines and the slim white trunks of birches. Wild asters and marigolds danced in the fields. Overhead white

clouds sailed along in the crisp breeze, turning to rose, salmon and mauve as the shadows lengthened before Mount Tom, and the pond below reflected their glory. Hattie was sure then that Litchfield was the most beautiful place in the world.

The parsonage was quieter that fall, with the four oldest children away, but it made more work for the others. There were apples to be picked and stored in cellar bins. There was cider to be made, squashes, pumpkins, corn, and nuts to be gathered, dry beans to be shelled, and hams and bacons cured in bitter-sweet hickory smoke.

The air-tight canning process was not in use then. Most foods were preserved in sugar, salt or vinegar, or were dried or frozen. The idea of dehydrated and frozen foods is not new, but modern methods are better. In old New England nature took care of the freezing process very well in winter. The real problem was to keep foods fresh in summer. Many people built ice-houses, with blocks of ice cut from winter ponds packed in sawdust between the double walls.

Each year the Beechers pared great quantities of apples and quinces, to be cooked with cider, sugar and spices until thick and dark, then packed away in barrels to be frozen. They called this tasty concoction "cider applesauce."

One bright Saturday morning the Beechers assembled in the big kitchen for the annual apple-peeling bee. There were the two small boys—Charles still limping a trifle from his knee injury—Hattie and George, with Dr. Beecher as master of ceremonies. Brown and yellow bowls of Bennington pottery were ranged on the long table, with a pile of

well-scoured knives; and on the floor beneath were baskets of apples and quinces. Holly was busy laying the fire under the huge iron kettle in the yard, while Mrs. Beecher prepared the spices.

"Looks like an herculean task we have before us," observed Dr. Beecher cheerfully, as he took his place at the end of the table to work the patent apple-peeler. "I'll tell you what we'll do to make the time go off. George, you and I will take turns to see who can tell the most out of Scott's novels."

His boundless energy swept them all along, and knives and tongues flew, as whole scenes were vividly retold from *Ivanhoe*, *The Black Dwarf* and *The Bride of Lammermoor*. When the story-tellers paused, Hattie prompted and urged them on, while the small boys listened entranced, as often as not putting the cores in with the apples.

When the novels were exhausted, they turned to reciting poetry. This was Hattie's chance. Her father knew a good deal of Milton, and George of Scott, but she knew more Byron. Finally they fell to talking of the future, which seemed to hold such glowing opportunities, if only there were some practical means of attaining them.

"I don't know what we're to do with you, George," said his father. "I do wish I could send you away to school."

"I wish so, too," said earnest George, who of all the boys was best suited for the ministry.

"Now that Ned is through Yale, I won't have to worry about him," Dr. Beecher went on, "but William isn't strong enough to work his way, as Ned did. He's older than you,

and should have what little help I can give him. You'll have to wait your turn, my lad."

"Yes, Papa, I know," answered George with a sigh. He was thinking how hard Ned had struggled to earn his way by part-time teaching. His daily schedule had been so heavy that, after setting aside one hour for exercise and one for Bible reading and prayer, there were only forty-five minutes left for all his meals, and even that time he begrudged.

"Papa, what are you going to do with me?" ventured Hattie. "You know I have only one more year at Miss Pierce's."

"I can't see that far ahead. I'd like for all my children to have higher education, but there are too many ahead of you, Hattie, and it's hard for a girl to earn her way."

"Harriet is a good little seamstress," put in Mrs. Beecher. "Perhaps she should take up the tailoring trade. It's a genteel profession for a girl."

"Oh, Mama!" protested Hattie, for she disliked sewing.

"'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' " quoted her father. "You're young yet, child. Right now I'd like to see you win some prizes at the Academy."

"I might try for the Music. George always takes the Drawing prizes."

"All of Roxana's children have her bent for drawing," remarked Dr. Beecher to his wife. "It's a splendid thing for the girls, but George has more important aims in life. If we could only get him started! Ah, well, the Lord will provide."

Tuition fees had always been a problem for the poverty-ridden parson. He had solved it, in part, by teaching Bible classes at the Academy in return for free tuition for his family. If George went away, Miss Pierce might consent to take Henry Ward in his place.

But that autumn brought an addition to the household—a pretty baby girl, named Isabella. Hattie devoted much of her time to the new arrival, and loved her, even if she was only a half-sister. But expenses mounted, and George's prospects looked slimmer than ever.

Before long, however, Dr. Beecher's faith in Providence was justified. A letter came from Edward with important news. He had been made Head of the Hartford Grammar School. Now at last he could have that watch and chain, on which to hang his cherished Phi Beta Kappa key. And better still, he had arranged for George to be admitted to the school, tuition free!

At family prayers Lyman Beecher thanked the Lord for His timely assistance, assuring Him that George would make the most of this opportunity, and that once the boy was enrolled in the ranks of His servants, His kindness would be amply repaid.

So George set forth into the world with a grim, determined look on his boyish face; and Hattie watched him down the road, feeling lonely and a little envious. It should be her turn next, but was the Lord really interested in higher education for girls?

THE CLIMAX of the busy autumn was Thanksgiving, chief holiday of New England. Pies by the dozen were baked far in advance, and placed in the storeroom to freeze. The children cracked nuts and chopped raisins and citron for the mincemeat, frequently sampling the cider to make sure it was aging just right.

All the absent ones except Kate came home to admire the baby and report progress. All were doing well except William. Poor Will, not brilliant like the others, was discouraged and half ill.

"Son, I fear you have inherited my weak stomach," said his father. "You fret and worry too much, then you get nervous dyspepsia."

"Maybe so," replied Will gloomily, "but it might help if my landlady would serve something for breakfast besides boiled pork and warmed-over potatoes."

They missed Kate, of course. Dr. Beecher read aloud to the group her last letter, in which she had said:

I have agreed to stay on here for the winter, and tutor the two young Fisher girls. This will serve to occupy my mind . . . I have somewhat mastered my grief, and ceased to rebel at Fate. I am resolved never to marry, but shall devote the remainder of my life to doing good. Just what form my efforts will take, I have not yet decided.

"Poor Kate!" they all exclaimed. "But she didn't say a word about the legacy."

"In a way, she did," said Mary. "I suppose she means to spend it in 'doing good.' Some sort of charity, perhaps."

"Charity begins at home," muttered Will, but Ned glared at him.

"Now *my* idea is," boomed Ned, "she should use it to open a school. Teaching is all a single woman can do; and what could do the world more good than training the minds and morals of the young?"

"Yes, and I could help her," agreed Mary, who was more studious than Kate, and at eighteen was already a successful teacher.

"My experience has shown me," continued Ned, "that there are many defects in our system of education. If I were head of a school all my own, I could greatly improve matters."

Dr. Beecher smiled at the cocksure wisdom of his twenty-year-old son, but he said, "I daresay you could, lad. A Beecher school would be a fine thing for all of us. It might solve the problem of educating the younger ones."

They talked on, growing so enthusiastic over the idea that they quite forgot it was, after all, Kate's money.

At last the holiday feast was ready, and they took their places at the long table with its tempting array of choice New England dishes, meat, fowl and game. For once no boarders were present—just the family and Aunt Esther. As Lyman Beecher looked down at the beloved faces, his eyes filled with tears, and he offered up a long prayer of thanks for the joys of home, and the lives of all his children. Yet a Puritan note of fear crept in, as he said, thinking of Kate's sorrow, "A family so numerous as ours is a broad mark for the arrows of Death. God grant that none may be

called suddenly and unprepared, leaving me to mourn over them without hope!"

Hattie was thankful just to be alive, and hungry, and to have such a wonderful Papa.

IT IS HARD to imagine winter without Christmas, but in the early Nineteenth Century, the Calvinist descendants of the Puritans had no such holiday in their calendar. Their forefathers had frowned upon it as a pagan and Popish festival, quite without Christian meaning. They could prove that Christ was not born anywhere near the twenty-fifth of December, and that the early Christians had had no such celebration. So in Litchfield the stores and schools kept open as usual.

True, the Episcopalians, a small group, had a special church service on the evening of the twenty-fourth. The room was decorated with evergreen boughs, and lighted by many tallow candles, while over the altar hung a gilt star. There were no trees, no *crèches*, no carols, and no gifts. But even this slight gesture of festival attracted visitors from the other churches, who filled the little church to overflowing. The Beecher children were always among them. They hungered for entertainment.

There was pitifully little amusement for villagers in those days, so little of spectacle or man-made beauty, that they enjoyed all the more the natural beauties of the hills and streams, and the pageant of the changing seasons. No wonder so many of New England's great men were nature-

lovers—Whittier, Bryant, Whitman, Thoreau—and even city dwellers loved the country. The great world of city streets, art galleries, concert halls and theatres seemed very far from Litchfield, and Hattie was scarcely aware of its existence.

New England winters are noted for their severity, and this one of 1822-23 was no exception. The winds howled about the old parsonage, flapping loose boards and rattling window panes, while the timbers popped and creaked in the bitter cold. There were a hundred strange, disturbing noises at night, or so it seemed to Hattie, as she lay shivering between the icy sheets, which even a warm brick placed in the bed could never make quite comfortable. The snow fell for days at a time, and drifts grew higher than her head.

Snow was fun, for it meant coasting, but winter in a drafty house without central heating had many drawbacks. Life was lived around the stoves and hearths. If any liquid was left overnight in a crockery or china vessel, it promptly froze and broke the container. And oh, how hard it was to get up and dress in the morning!

It was Henry Ward's duty to go down early, start the fires and put the kettle on. Often the well was so choked with ice that no water could be drawn. If the cistern had frozen, too, he must carry water from the brook, first cutting a hole in the ice. On wash days they must go a long mile to the Pond, and haul water home in a barrel.

In the long winter evenings the Beechers would often gather in the kitchen around the great fireplace with its polished brass andirons, and black pot-hooks dangling from

the swinging crane. The flames danced and crackled cheerily, and stray snowflakes coming down the wide chimney, hissed on the hot logs. Stoves were coming into fashion—the Beechers boasted of a Russian stove—but the children loved the cozy glow of the open fire, and thought no food was so delicious as that prepared on the hearth—potatoes roasted in the ashes, or “fire-cake” baked on a board set up near the coals.

While the others sewed or knitted, Dr. Beecher would draw near the whale-oil lamp, and read aloud. *Paradise Lost* was his favorite poem; he read it with eloquence and feeling, so moved at times by the sufferings of the fallen Lucifer that his voice would choke, and tears dim his eyes. But this winter they had all of Scott to choose from, as well.

When the logs were reduced to coals, the children often popped corn and roasted chestnuts or frozen apples. A frozen apple, quickly thawed, was deliciously juicy and had a different flavor.

The first February thaw brought a great annual event known as “the parson’s wood-spell.” According to church contract, the minister must receive both salary and firewood. Custom had made it a holiday for the men of the parish, who came in a body with their contributions of logs piled high on sleds.

The Beechers made ample preparations. Lard was “rendered” from fat pork for the frying of countless doughnuts, to be stored in crockery jars along with an apple to keep them moist. Pies were baked, and beer was brewed. The family never drank it, but Dr. Beecher could not re-

fuse his parishioners a mug of "hot flip" after their day's labor in the snowy woods. This drink, as he made it, was simply beer heated and supposedly given a better flavor by thrusting into each mug the "flip-irons," heated red-hot in the coals.

When the day arrived, the Beechers kept close watch for the train of sleds, and by the time the logs were unloaded, the food and drink were ready. The men of the parish trooped into the kitchen to warm and refresh themselves, and to crack jokes with the parson. Holly served the beer and spiced cider, the women passed the pie and doughnuts, while the boys raced back and forth, wielding the flip-irons and reheating them on the hearth.

Dr. Beecher was everywhere at once, greeting his guests, laughing and exchanging anecdotes. But all the while he was counting noses, and estimating the amount of wood donated. For it took no less than eighteen loads to heat the parsonage.

Late that month, a letter came from Kate:

I have been talking with Edward, and am thinking of opening a girls' school in Hartford next fall. There is no institution of higher learning for girls in that city, and perhaps I could accomplish some good for my sex. Father, what do you think of this plan?

Of course Dr. Beecher approved. But he held high ambitions. He wrote to his daughter: "I should be ashamed to have you keep only a commonplace, middling sort of school. It is expected to be of a *higher order*."

Soon after, the Hartford newspapers carried a modest little announcement:

The Misses C. and M. Beecher will open in this place a school, intended exclusively for those who wish to pursue the higher branches of Female Education.

This created no stir in Hartford, but to one family in Litchfield it seemed vastly important. It meant the Beecher girls were launched on a career!

V

ONCE AGAIN it was spring. The morning was chilly, but the south wind bore a hint of promise. Lyman Beecher sniffed the air.

"Time to plant my cucumbers!" he cried with glee.

"Isn't it a trifle early?" protested his wife mildly, knowing he would plant them when the mood was on him.

"Not a bit of it. They'll be all right in cold frames. I can't let Taylor get ahead of me *this* year, weather or no. Now I wonder which will be the best corner—" and he dashed out to survey the yard.

Every year Dr. Beecher and his friend, Dr. Taylor of New Haven, had a race to see who could raise the first edible cucumber. Taylor, being nearer the coast, had the advantage of milder climate, but Lyman used cold frames, and secretly hoped for late frosts at New Haven. Last spring had been warm, and he had lost the contest.

"No use talking," shouted the parson as he skipped back into the kitchen. "It has to be that corner where the logs are piled. I tried planting in the northwest corner last year, and look what happened. We'll just have to saw those logs up right away."

"Oh, Lyman, why go to so much bother over those cucumbers?" remonstrated Mrs. Beecher. "You know they always disagree with you."

"I don't have to eat 'em. You can use 'em for pickles. It's high time that wood was split, anyway; and the doctor says I need more exercise. Henry Ward, run quick and tell Holly to sharpen up the crosscut saw. Wife, where did you put my cucumber seed?"

The wood-cutting bee was on. They missed the help of the older boys, but Holly and Dr. Beecher were master hands with axe and saw. Henry wielded the hatchet, while Hattie and Charles carried the sticks into the shed. They laughed and sang, and told jokes, and before evening the corner was clear, even of chips, which Hattie swept up to save for kindling.

"Now you children hunt out the fishing tackle," said Dr. Beecher, "and Holly, dig some worms. Tomorrow early we're going on a long fishing trip."

"Me, too, Papa?" cried Hattie.

"Certainly, you too. You're a fine little worker, Hattie. The Lord made a great mistake by not making you a boy."

Hattie glowed at this high praise; and forgetting the ache in her arms and the splinters in her fingers, she ran off happily to find a good fishing pole. The fish were biting

well next day—Papa always seemed to know the right time—and Hattie caught three bass and a bull-head, and was highly elated. There were advantages, she thought, in being the oldest child at home.

THE LILACS had faded, and the fragrant pink cabbage-roses were a riot of bloom, when again there came sad tidings. Dr. Beecher, returned from the village, announced to the family in sorrowful tones, "Byron is dead! Gone!"

To Hattie those words sounded the knell of a secret world of loveliness all her own. She sat in stunned silence as the talk went on, but no detail escaped her. Byron had died of a fever while in Missolonghi, fighting against the Turks in the war for Greek freedom. He had given all his fortune to that cause, and now he had given his life, as well.

"But why?" queried Mrs. Beecher. "He was English. The Greeks were none of his concern."

"The cause of Liberty should be the concern of all free men," declared her husband solemnly.

"Well, Byron exercised too much freedom in his private life, I understand," retorted Mrs. Beecher.

"Ah, yes! A great talent wasted," said Dr. Beecher, shaking his head sadly. "I did so hope he might live to do something for Christ. What a harp he might have swept!"

"Perhaps we should not judge him too harshly, Lyman. No doubt he suffered sorely in this life with the burden

of sin on his soul; and now he has died without hope of Heaven. Poor, unfortunate man!"

"I wish he could have talked with Taylor and me," sighed Lyman. "I believe we could have got him out of his troubles."

Hattie could bear no more. With the mumbled excuse that she was going to hunt wild strawberries, she seized a basket and went out into the fields. But she did not look for berries. Instead she flung herself down in a bed of sweet clover, and gazed into the deep blue overhead, with its slow-drifting clouds. She did not cry. This grief was too deep—too sublime. Now there would be no more poems from Byron's magic pen, and her dream of seeing and speaking with him could never be realized. But he had died a hero, fighting in a war not his own, because he loved Liberty so much. It seemed a fitting death for a poet.

Where was his soul now? If not in Heaven, then surely not—no, there must be a place, a special sort of Heaven, for beauty-loving souls like Byron's. Softly she quoted the poet's own lyric: He "walks in beauty like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies . . ." Thus she found comfort.

All America, and all Litchfield, mourned Byron. When Sunday came, the young ladies from the Academy, and the young gentlemen from the local law school, wearing the fashionable Byron collar and the carefully careless Byron hair-cut, were all in attendance at Dr. Beecher's church. The parson saw here an occasion for a timely ser-

He began as usual, reading a dull doctrinal sermon, while the minds of his hearers wandered. Then suddenly he tossed aside his notes, shoved his spectacles high onto his forehead, and launched forth on a new text: The memory of the wicked shall rot. The congregation was electrified. He went on to paint a grim picture of the wasted talents and misspent life of the deceased poet, exhorting his young hearers to choose a better course.

Hattie was not altogether convinced. Since all mortals are sinners, why shouldn't a great poet be also a great sinner? And how could his life be called *wasted*? Papa said he lacked Christian purpose. So that was it. Writing beautiful poems and dying a hero's death weren't enough. Papa must be right . . . and yet . . . she simply could not believe that Byron's soul had gone to eternal punishment, nor that his memory would ever rot. Her idol might have feet of clay, but he still had the wings of an angel.

EARLY that June Hattie celebrated her twelfth birthday. Not that there was any actual celebration, for the Beechers did not observe birthdays with gifts or candle-lit cakes, but in Hattie's mind it marked an important milestone on the road to growing up. Her stepmother thought so, too.

"You are now in your thirteenth year, Harriet. It's time you gave serious thought to the destiny of your soul. When I was your age, I was in a state of hope."

Hattie had been giving it thought. No one with a Cal-

vinist upbringing was ever allowed to forget that Heaven and Hell were just around the corner, and that this world was but a brief passageway to one or the other. Heaven she could dimly visualize as a background for her angel Mother, but the vision of Hell eluded her.

Years ago, she and Henry Ward had thought they had it. In the old garret was a little door which opened into the chimney leading from the smoke-room where hams and bacons were cured. When the children peered in and saw the roaring flames far below, the sparks flying up into their faces, and listened to the sizzling of the meat, and the wind moaning outside, it seemed the very picture of the place of damnation. But now Hattie knew that had been merely a childish fancy. She suspected that even her pious stepmother did not believe in a Hell of eternal fire. Once when Papa had been reading aloud from *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, Mama had risen indignantly, saying, "Mr. Beecher, I consider that a slander on the Lord Almighty!" and had left the room.

No, it was not the fear of Hell that made Hattie long for the assurance of Heaven, but rather the desire to please Papa, and the hope of rejoining Mother. But how to get started on the road to salvation? "Conversion" was a strange business. It had taken George a long time to attain his "conviction of sin," and even yet he was not certain of his "election" to eternal bliss. It was now her turn to agonize, but she kept putting it off, pondering, and hoping for more light.

"The natural depravity of man," which Papa often talked

about, had no meaning for Hattie. Everyone she knew seemed very good. As for her own "sins," none of them seemed worthy of the Lord's attention. It was sinful, she had been told, to waste time in day-dreaming and forget her daily tasks, to take pride in her good memory, to covet the pretty clothes other girls wore, and to envy the boys because they were boys. But the Lord already knew about these sins, and how she struggled against them. Such meager repentance would never serve to lift her into the desirable state of hope. But help in this worrisome matter came from an unexpected source.

The parsonage was overcrowded just then, and Charles and Henry were sharing their bedroom with Holly, the Negro helper. In the evenings Hattie, down the hall, could hear his deep voice rising and falling for hours on end.

"Henry, what does Holly do in there?" she asked. "Is he talking to himself?"

"No, he'th readin' the Bible," answered Henry. "Part of the time he talkth to himthelf, or to God."

"Is he agonizing, or just praying?"

"Neither one. Juth talkin', like God wath a friend of hith, right there in the room. You ought to hear him, Hattie. He geth an awful lot out of the Bible."

Hattie stole down the hall, and listened at the half-open door. In his rich, mellow voice, Holly was reading the Bible as she had never heard it read—passages which were unfamiliar. He often paused to make comments, or chuckle over it. Certainly there was no soul struggle here. She would talk with Holly. Perhaps he had some secret formula

Then, all at once, the longed-for thing happened. It was Communion Sunday, and the sun gleamed on the white cloth and shining silver of the altar service. Her father had chosen one of his rare, simple sermons of invitation, on the text: I call ye not servants, but friends. In conclusion he said, "Come! Will you not trust your soul to this faithful Friend?"

Hattie felt a sudden upsurge of emotion—half loneliness and longing for a safe refuge, half ecstasy for the beauty of the day, and the sheer joy of living. Her impulse was to join the communicants at the altar, but shyness held her back. She sat quietly fumbling for her pocket-kерchief to wipe away the tears.

This new-found joy, this sense of belonging—could it be "conversion?" Surely it had come too easily; but then, it might, by some miracle, be the real thing. She must tell her father, yet she feared to do so. He might laugh, or lecture her about conviction, or worse still, ask her if she wasn't feeling well. (Since Dr. Beecher had had stomach trouble, he had grown wary of what he called "dyspeptic piety," and often startled and embarrassed some penitent soul by inquiring as to the state of his digestion.) But after the service, when Hattie had shyly explained her emotional experience, Dr. Beecher did none of those things. Instead, he took her in his arms, and said gently, "Then a new flower has blossomed in the Kingdom today." Secretly, however, he did not consider the matter at all settled.

Not long after, the Reverend Taylor of New Haven rode over to Litchfield, proudly bearing his first large cu-

cumber. But Dr. Beecher had one still larger, thus winning that year's contest.

As the disgruntled visiting pastor sat with his friend in the parlor, he spied Hattie in the hall.

"Is that your little daughter Harriet?" he asked. "Why, she's almost a woman. Has she—er—entered the fold?"

"She seems to think so," responded Dr. Beecher, "but I fear it was only a strong flare-up of natural good feeling."

"Natural good feeling?" repeated Dr. Taylor, shaking his head. "Dear, dear me! This younger generation! They want quick and easy results in all things. You and I, friend Beecher, had to struggle long and hard for our election. So must they. I trust you have pointed out to this child her grievous error?"

"No, not yet. Fact is, she seemed so happy about it I hadn't the heart."

"Let me speak to her," offered Dr. Taylor.

"Oh, no, don't trouble yourself, Taylor. She's only twelve. Give her time."

"No trouble at all," cried the good man. "Ofttimes a word from a stranger bears more weight. Harriet! Come here a moment."

Hattie came, so surprised she almost forgot to curtsy. Dr. Taylor cleared his throat ominously.

"Harriet, I have been told that you fancy yourself in a state of hope. What, may I ask, gives you the justification—er—the boldness for such belief?"

Hattie hesitated, shrinking inwardly. "Well, sir—I—I know all my catechism, sir."

"Very commendable, I'm sure, but no guarantee of salvation. Have you touched the depths of anguish and self-abasement? Do you realize the depravity of the human soul? No, I see you do not. Let me impress upon you the words of the great Jonathan Edwards. He said that children, even innocent babes, until they have received divine sanctification, are but *vipers*."

"Vipers?" echoed Hattie, thinking she had not heard aright.

"Yes, vipers. Do you know what a viper is, Harriet?" (She did, but there was no chance to say so.) "It is a snake—a venomous reptile, lowest of all living creatures, condemned for its sins in the Garden of Eden to crawl on its belly forever! Remember, Man cannot walk into God's presence. No, he must *crawl*—crawl to the foot of the throne! Go, now, my poor, foolish child, and meditate on this in all humility."

Hattie went, gladly. She fled to the orchard, and climbed her favorite apple tree, where she perched for an hour, trying to untangle her confused thoughts.

"Am I just a foolish child, not ready for salvation? Papa never said so, but he let Dr. Taylor say it, and call me a viper. Well, snakes are God's creatures, aren't they? And Holly says God loves everything. . . . But if he does, why should He want us to come to Him crawling, like a dog when he's afraid you're going to whip him? 'Perfect love casteth out fear.' I should think God would rather we'd come joyfully, skipping and singing. Or like Holly says, walking with him and holding His hand. Oh, dear! Holly's

way and Dr. Taylor's way are so different, they can't both be right. Dr. Taylor ought to know more than a poor Negro farm hand, but I like Holly's way so much better. Maybe Dr. Taylor was just trying to be disagreeable because he lost the cucumber race.

"I wonder how it feels to be a viper. I suppose he thinks crawling is a perfectly good way to get around. He doesn't go looking for someone to bite. On a nice summer day like this, I'll bet he'd be lying in the sun, all warm and lazy and satisfied. I wish I were a viper or something, so I wouldn't need to worry about my soul.

"Well, I won't worry now. I'll take Holly's way, and rest on the Promise, and try to love everything and everybody—even Dr. Taylor! But now I'll go and play with the kittens. They are so *easy* to love."

Cheerful once more, Hattie climbed down and ran lightly to the barn. From this, her first real bout with the Puritans, she had escaped untouched.

V I

KATE came home that summer, after a year with the Fishers, a changed Kate, much older and more serious. She was determinedly cheerful, however, and made it plain she wanted no one to mention her tragic loss. Her thoughts were fixed firmly on the future. She and Mary were full of plans for their school, and when Edward came they talked of little else.

"There is no reason on earth why girls shouldn't have as thorough an education as boys," declared Kate. "These fashionable finishing schools, where they teach only Music and Drawing, a smattering of French and Italian, Needlework and Drawing-room Deportment, are just a waste of time. They're meant for the rich and frivolous. There is scarcely a place where an intelligent girl can get a solid education."

"But, Kate, we'll have to teach those frothy subjects," argued practical Mary. "People expect it."

"I suppose so," admitted Kate. "*You* can teach them. But I mean to offer Botany and Chemistry, Latin and Algebra, History and Logic and Moral Philosophy—"

"Good!" Ned applauded. "Moral training is most important. I'm afraid Logic is beyond the grasp of the female mind, but—"

"Nonsense!" retorted Kate. "That's the whole trouble. You men think we're weaklings mentally as well as physically. Just wait!"

"That reminds me," put in Ned, "you should by all means give a course in Physical Education. Health affects both mind and morals."

"But, Kate!" wailed Mary. "How are we going to teach all those new things when we don't know anything about them ourselves?"

"We can learn, from books. Look at Aunt Esther. She's learned a lot of Botany and Chemistry from books."

"But she's been years doing it. Our school opens in nine weeks."

"Mary, you'll be surprised how much can be crammed into the human mind in nine weeks, when necessity is the spur. I know, from my recent tutoring. We'll map out a course of study for the summer. Ned, will you tutor me in Latin and Algebra?"

"Of course. And I'll plan the Physical Education, and put you two girls through the exercises every day. They'll do you no end of good. But Kate, I don't know where you can find textbooks suitable for young girls in all these subjects."

"If necessary, I'll write some myself," replied dauntless Kate. "We'll have to omit modern languages this year. Mary, you prepare to teach History. I'll work with Father on Moral Philosophy, and maybe Aunt Esther will help us in Botany and Chemistry."

"For Botany you must make an herbarium," said Ned.

"What's that?" asked both girls at once.

"An herbarium is a collection of plant specimens dried and mounted, classified and labelled with scientific names and descriptions, leaf and flower of the various species—"

"Good Heavens, Ned!" interrupted Mary. "How will we ever find time to hunt up all those things, or know them when we see them? I don't know a horse-chestnut from a pussy-willow!"

"Oh, the trees go in a separate collection," explained Ned helpfully. "Your first one should contain only herbaceous specimens. A hundred will be enough to begin with, and later you should—"

"Do hush, Ned!" groaned Kate, adding regretfully,

"Maybe we'll have to omit Botany, at least the first year."

Just then Hattie, who had been listening quietly, ventured a suggestion.

"I'll help you collect plants, and so will Henry Ward. We know where just about everything grows around here, and Auntie knows all the names. I'll bet we could get a hundred, easy."

"Of course you could, Hattie," cried Kate in vast relief. "You children spend half your time outdoors, anyway, and you might as well be doing something useful. You can press the specimens, too."

"George knows how to label and mount them," said Ned. "He has seen it done at Grammar School."

The whole family toiled that summer to get Kate's project off to a good start. Hattie was happy to feel she was helping her poor, bereaved sister. She had no thought of reward; but before leaving, Kate called her aside.

"You've been splendid help, Hattie, and I appreciate it. If the school goes well, I'll try to arrange for you to come there, perhaps next year."

"Oh, Kate! Could you?"

"We'll see. Now work hard this winter, and finish with honors at the Academy. Do stand up straight, child. You're getting more round-shouldered as you grow taller. You must do Edward's posture exercises every single day. I want you to be a good example for my students when you come to Hartford."

"Oh, I will! I promise! You won't have to be ashamed of me."

Hattie did work hard that winter, now that she had a goal—a definite reason for working. She won a Music prize, and a Mention of Merit in English Composition; for she was now in the writing class under Mr. Brace, her favorite teacher. She was busy and hopeful, and the time seemed to fly.

IT WAS Closing Day at the Academy, and the whole town was there. Among other things of interest to proud parents was the reading of the three best compositions, or essays, of the year. The reading was done by a gentleman of the faculty, for ladies did not appear on public platforms. The names of the modest young authors were announced later.

One of these essays bore the ponderous title, *Can the Immortality of the Soul be Proved by the Light of Nature?* It began:

It has justly been concluded by philosophers of every age that "the proper study of mankind is man;" and his nature and composition, both physical and mental, have been the subjects of the most critical examination. In the course of these researches many have been at a loss to account for the change that takes place in the body at the time of death. By some it has been attributed to the flight of its tenant, and by others, to its final annihilation.

Dr. Beecher, who was sitting on the platform with the faculty, listened with great interest, nodding approval at some points, or frowning if he did not quite agree. Curiosity

overcame him, and he leaned over to whisper to Mr. Brace, "Who wrote that?"

"Your daughter, sir," was the smiling reply.

The parson's face showed astonishment and pride. When the reading ended, he leaned back in his chair and muttered, "I'd give a hundred dollars if she'd been born a boy."

For Hattie, who had watched her father intently all the while, this was a big moment. She had told him nothing of her masterpiece, had debated long in choosing the subject. But Mr. Brace always said that to write interestingly, you should write about what you were interested in, and have something to say.

Well, she was interested in immortality. She had thought about it a great deal, ever since the death of Byron. Spring seemed to be Nature's reminder that life never ceases. So she had labored long on the essay. Maybe it sounded too much like a sermon, but how could she help that? She had been brought up on sermons. In the end, she had succeeded in interesting not only Mr. Brace and the audience, but Papa! There could be no greater triumph.

Schooling was now over for Hattie, unless she could go to Hartford. But Kate's letters about the new school were none too encouraging. She had only fifteen students, tuition six dollars a term, and was losing money. She wrote:

Of course there is no profit in it yet, and I expect none, but it should be self-supporting. My aim is to make higher education possible for girls of moderate means. The public must be led to see the value of this idea, and that takes time.

Mary had also written recently:

I'll be so glad when school is over, and we can bask in the quiet of Litchfield. All is noise and confusion here—the girls crowded into one small room, the harness shop below, the traffic rumbling over the cobblestones. The stagecoaches always stop at Ripley's Coffee House across the way, where I suspect they serve something much stronger than coffee! We seem to be accomplishing little, and Kate is worn out, and a bit discouraged, though she won't admit it. Unless we can find a better location for next year, I don't see how we can continue.

"I'm afraid they'll have to give it up," sighed Mrs. Beecher, but her husband was more optimistic.

"Wife, you have too little faith. The Lord always looks after the Beechers. And Kate's a fighter, like her father." If Dr. Beecher had a favorite daughter, it was his first-born.

Hattie was dismayed. Her one chance of going away and learning wonderful new things seemed about to vanish. She would have to stay home, and sew and tend babies all her days, and watch the boys go off to college. Every night she prayed earnestly for Kate and the school.

And when the girls returned, everything was suddenly all right.

"Give up my school?" cried Kate. "I wouldn't dream of it! Why, the enrollment will be doubled next year, and I've found a better location. Hattie, you're coming back with us. It's all arranged."

Her living expenses were to be handled by the exchange system common in that day. The Bull family of Hartford

were sending their daughter to the Academy. She would live under the Beecher roof while Mrs. Bull took Hattie to board.

Hattie was dizzy with delight, but Kate brought her back to earth. "Now, Hattie," she warned, "I want you to work hard at your Latin this summer, so you can enter the advanced class. And I wish you'd help collect more specimens for our herbariums—I mean, *herbaria*. We must do trees this summer."

"Poor little Hattie!" laughed Mary. "Next thing, Kate will put her to *teaching* the Botany class!"

They all laughed at this joke—all but Kate, who was looking thoughtful.

Hattie plunged into the summer activities, but she found time to dream and plan, and to inspect her meager wardrobe. She would need more pantalettes. The white ruffles soiled so easily. Should she take her long-sleeved, high-necked aprons, or would two pinafores be enough? What did the girls in Hartford wear, anyway?

But Mrs. Beecher and the girls conferred on all these weighty problems, and found a couple of old dresses to be cut over. Hattie had only to do the sewing tasks assigned her.

One hot July afternoon she was standing more or less patiently before the long mirror in her stepmother's room, having a dress fitted. It had been one of Mary's—a pale blue cashmere wool. Hattie surveyed her reflection without enthusiasm. She was too thin, and much too tanned. The lovely ladies in Scott's novels always had lily-white skins.

"Mama," she said plaintively, "this dress doesn't look a

bit nice on me like it did on Mary. What's wrong with it?"

"Hmmm! Mary has a figure," mumbled Mrs. Beecher, removing the pins from her mouth, "and a fair complexion. This robin's-egg blue is a trying color, unless you are blonde."

"It makes me look as brown as an Indian! I do wish I could do something to make me whiter!"

"Well, child, you *will* run about in the sun without a hat or gloves. You know I've tried to persuade you to wear them."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Hattie. "I guess I was never meant to be pretty. If I'd only been born with auburn hair and a milk-white skin, like yours. Mama, your complexion is just beautiful!"

Mrs. Beecher looked pleased in spite of herself. Her complexion was her one pride, and secret sin, since all pride, she thought, was sinful.

"I was told so, as a girl," she said. "But your hair is dark, Hattie. It doesn't call for such a fair skin . . . Now the hem . . . I'll admit the dress would be more becoming if you were not so dark."

"I'll bet you know something I could use. Do you, Mama?"

"I don't approve of young girls' thinking too much about their looks. Their chief concern should be manners and morals . . . Turn around a bit more . . . but I believe a good bleach can be made from buttermilk and cucumber juice. Of course I've never tried it, but—"

"Oh, thank you, Mama! Could I—would you—"

"Be careful! You'll pull out the pins! Your father's cucumbers are plentiful, more than I need for pickles, and I do hate to see them go to waste."

Bleaching thus became a part of Hattie's daily routine. She remembered to wear a hat, most of the time. After a few weeks she was sure she could see an improvement, although she was still far from being as fair as a lily.

In late August two letters arrived for Hattie. They were the first she had ever received except from relatives, and she tingled with pleased surprise. They were from Hartford girls, Kate's pupils whom she had asked to write notes of welcome to her little sister. These messages were correctly formal, and were signed, "Catherine Cogswell" and "Georgiana May."

"Two of the very nicest girls in school," Kate explained. "Georgiana is the sweetest and most studious. Catherine is the prettiest and most popular. They all adore Catherine, and fight for the chance to sit next to her in class."

Hattie was overwhelmed that two such glamorous strangers should bother to write to her. One moment she could hardly wait to meet them, and again she would be filled with shy dread. What if these elegant city girls should think her queer and countrified?

As the time for leaving drew near, this dread increased, and Hattie also suffered the pangs of premature homesickness. Who would look after the kittens when she was gone? And the hens, and the baby? How could Henry Ward manage without her? She would miss the boys, and Papa. Why couldn't she have been twins, so one of her could

stay there always, while the other went out into the world to do great and noble deeds? The thought of leaving became unbearable; she felt that her soul was being torn apart. But she said nothing of this, and the family marvelled at her quietness.

"What's wrong with Hattie?" said Mary. "She seemed so happy at first, but now she goes mooning about as if Hartford meant nothing to her."

"She always was an odd child," replied Kate. "You never know what's going on behind those owl-eyes. She'll be all right after school starts. The girls will draw her out of her shell."

"I hope so," said Mary. "The change will be good for her. She's such a little home-body."

Aunt Esther was more understanding. When Hattie paid her a farewell call, she peered sharply at her niece over her steel-rimmed spectacles.

"You're a pretty young fledgling to be leaving the home nest. I suspect you'll be homesick. But the little birds must try their wings, you know, even if mother bird has to push them off the limb for their first flight."

"I almost wish I wasn't going at all," choked Hattie.

"That's no way to talk. Every Beecher girl must be prepared to earn her own living. Your poor father can hardly keep his head above water now, and the family growing all the time. Stiffen your backbone, child, and say to yourself, 'I'm doing what I can to lighten my father's burden.'"

"I guess I've just been thinking about myself," said Hattie contritely.

"All young people are selfish," declared her aunt, "but some of them outgrow it. I believe you will. Now for goodness' sake don't track dirt into Mrs. Bull's house, and do keep your room tidy, or she'll think you've had no raising, which you haven't, much, except from me." But while she scolded, she slipped into Hattie's hand a cherished volume of Byron's poems.

The day of departure was upon them. Hattie's few belongings were stowed neatly in the shabby old carpetbag. She had put in the Byron when no one was looking.

"I don't suppose," she ventured in a small voice, "I could take along one of the kittens, just for company?"

"Mercy, no!" snapped Kate. "Mrs. Bull would have a conniption fit. There'll be no time for kittens at Hartford."

In a haze of sadness, Hattie made a farewell round, visiting all her favorite haunts—the barn loft, the runaway shed, the attic playroom with the dusty toys in one corner, and her wooden doll, laid lovingly away in a box. She wandered by the brook, with its willow trees so good for whistle-making, and at Big Pond picked marigolds for the last time. She sat in the apple tree where she had dreamed away so many hours, and its branches swayed gently, as if to comfort her. She bade goodbye to all the animals, saying softly, "Don't forget me. I'll be back next summer." But she knew in her heart that nothing would ever be quite the same.

It was true. For Hattie was taking leave of more than pets, and home and Litchfield. She was bidding goodbye to childhood—to an odd little girl who was soon to become but a shadowy figure in an enchanted village of memory.

Part II

FIRST

FLIGHT

1824-1828



PART II

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VII

HARTFORD, in 1824, was a thriving town of five thousand souls, and to Hattie Beecher's country-bred eyes it seemed a vast metropolis. As they neared the busy, cobblestone streets of the business district, the three Beecher girls sat erect, and brushed futilely at the dust of their thirty-mile drive. Even tired old Dobbin revived, and stepped out as smartly as his age and the lumbering old carryall would permit.

They were forced to make way for shiny carriages drawn by fast, high-stepping pairs, then halted by the thundering stagecoach on its way from New York to Boston. Hattie gazed admiringly at the heads of the passengers inside—ladies in poke bonnets with wide, velvet ribbons and nodding plumes, and gentlemen in beaver hats of fawn or gray with stylish, curling side-burns.

"Some day," she said dreamily, "I mean to ride in a coach, all the way to Boston."

"Hattie, don't stare so!" said Kate, in sharp reproof.

"Oh, let the child look," said good-natured Mary. "She's never seen a place like Hartford. Over there is the Court-house, Hattie. Exceptionally fine, everyone says, for a town of this size. And there's the printing office. Just think! We have a *daily* newspaper."

"Yonder is the Museum of Paintings and Natural Curiosities. Interesting, and very instructive," Kate explained. "You can go there, Hattie, and stare as much as you like, without being rude."

Soon they reached Hattie's boarding place, and the sisters drove away, leaving her in the care of Mrs. Bull. She was a kind, motherly woman, bent on making the tired, shy little stranger feel at home. Carrying the carpetbag, she led the way upstairs to Hattie's room, and after a few friendly words, left her alone.

Hattie quickly washed her face and hands in the big china bowl on the washstand, arranged her scanty possessions, and sat down to gaze admiringly about her.

It was a little hall bedroom, nicely furnished. Blue-and-white braided rugs were on the painted floor. The white wallpaper bore a design of bright nosebags. The washstand and high bureau were handsomely carved; there was a sweet little rosewood writing-desk, and a cane-seated rocking chair, just right for a small girl. Best of all, the narrow bed was covered with a most beautiful bedspread edged with fringe. Mrs. Bull had called it a "counterpane."

A beautiful room, and all her own! To Hattie, who had always shared a room with her sisters, or been shoved about to accommodate boarders or guests, this was a rare luxury. She resolved to keep it always in perfect order, to make the bed early each morning, and never, never have a wrinkle in that lovely counterpane! Tired as she was now, Hattie would not think of mussing the bed by lying on it. She sat up stiffly in the little chair until she was called to supper.

The Bull household included two sons and a daughter, all very grown up. Mary Anne, the eldest, was a handsome brunette, whose long curls fell gracefully from a tall comb on top of her head. She had a flashing smile, and a vibrant voice.

"My daughter is soprano soloist in the church choir," Mrs. Bull explained with pride, "and if I do say so, she's quite the belle of Hartford. She's keeping steady company now with a very well-to-do young man."

Hattie couldn't help staring in awe at this glamorous creature, although she knew staring was rude. The Bulls were all pleasant people, and polite to Hattie, but it was plain they regarded her as a mere child, and of no importance.

That first evening they all sang hymns—all but one of the sons, who played the flute instead. This, and the fine, clear voice of Mary Anne, so inspired Hattie that she forgot to be self-conscious, and sang out lustily. It was the best possible way to make her feel at home.

The first day of school was a trying ordeal. Mary came by early for Hattie, and introduced her to the students as they

entered by twos and threes. The sprightly Catherine Cogswell, however, came surrounded by a large, chattering group of her satellites. She favored Hattie with her sweetest smile, and bent down to kiss her cheek.

"Welcome to Hartford!" she cried. "Girls, this is Miss Beecher's little sister from the country. Isn't she tiny? We'll have to look after her, won't we, girls?" Then she turned away, and promptly forgot all about Hattie, who could only stare after her in hopeless adoration.

Then came Georgiana May, alone. She was not especially pretty, and seemed older than her years. She put her arm about Hattie, and said with quiet sincerity, "We are all glad you came, Harriet. I hope you'll be happy here." She stayed by Hattie's side all day.

When the students were assembled, and Hattie looked over the group of thirty or more, her heart sank; for again she was a misfit. These girls were all at least two years older than she, and were very well dressed. To them she must seem like a country mouse, an outsider. Well, at least she could work hard, and try to be a credit to Kate.

With grim determination she applied herself to her studies. She was to take English Composition, Moral Philosophy, History, Algebra and Latin. But there was no advanced class in Latin, so Kate put her to work alone on translations of the Roman poets, Horace and Ovid, along with special study in Roman history. Kate, like modern educators, believed in correlating school subjects. Hattie found a new delight in classical literature and mythology, and her love of poetry grew. Each day after classes she went

straight to her room, and studied until bedtime, often forgetting to do her posture exercises. Her complexion grew steadily paler, even without the aid of cucumber juice.

Before long, however, she realized she would have no difficulty in keeping up with her classmates, so she relaxed a little, and began to explore her surroundings. She spent hours at the Museum, which gave her interesting things to write home about. Shopping was out of the question, for she had no money, but she flattened her nose against the shop windows, studying the styles, and becoming deliberately clothes conscious. If she couldn't wear stylish things, she thought, she could at least learn to talk about them, like the Hartford girls.

The hat shops fascinated her. The newest thing was the "gypsy bonnet," a flat-crowned, wide-brimmed creation, tied under the chin with ribbons. How she would have liked to buy one of those!

"Read the newspapers carefully," Kate advised her students. "You should be able to converse intelligently on topics of the day. The modern woman must be above idle gossip, and silly chitchat."

Hattie read every word in the Hartford daily, even the advertisements, hoping to increase her worldly knowledge. The paper sometimes contained bits of news about New York or Boston theatres. Having always been told that the playhouse was a den of evil, she skipped those items at first, but one day she was struck by the announcement of a new play by an American, James Nelson Barker. It was called *Superstition*, and was about Puritans, Indians and witch-

craft. Why, that was New England history! It would probably be very instructive; and how thrilling to see history come to life! And again, when she read that Scott's *Marmion* had been made into a play, she longed to see it, and wondered, guiltily, if theatre-going might be not so terribly wicked, after all.

There was entertainment of unquestioned propriety to be had in Hartford, if one had the price of admission. The paper told of a concert to be given by the Jubal Society of the Episcopal church. The program would include "Anthems, Choruses, Duetts and Solos, the order of which may be had with the purchase of tickets." Hattie thought this sounded wonderful, but of course she couldn't go.

Life at school was progressing well enough, although Kate, determined not to coddle her sister, demanded more of her than of the other girls. Her schoolmates were cordial, but never intimate. This was partly because Hattie was shy and different, but more because they feared to share their secrets with the Principal's sister. The students stood in awe of Miss Beecher, and thought it good policy to be nice to Hattie, but with reservations.

Hattie adored Catherine Cogswell, but from a distance. That popular young lady was too engrossed with her own clique to have much time for Hattie. She smiled, however, and bestowed small favors on her little admirer, especially when she thought Kate was looking. Hattie was humbly happy in the belief that Catherine kept a tiny place in her heart for the country mouse, as doubtless she did.

Balked in this friendship, Hattie came to depend more

and more on the companionship of Georgiana May. The Mays were not poor, but they were a large family, and Georgiana could understand many of the Beecher's domestic problems. She was a book lover, and lent Hattie many volumes, some of which Dr. Beecher might have approved—*The Vicar of Wakefield* and *Pilgrim's Progress*—and others he would have called sentimental trash—*Paul and Virginia*, and *Alonzo and Melissa*. Hattie found these tame, even stupid, compared with the novels of Scott; but she read them all because they were Georgiana's. The two girls often took long walks, discussing books, life and people, particularly themselves.

"I think you'll like *Pride and Prejudice*," said Georgiana, during one of these walks. "It isn't so silly as some love stories. The heroine, Elizabeth, was a splendid character. Only I did wish her family hadn't called her Lizzie. It doesn't seem to suit a strong-minded person."

"We use nicknames a lot at home," remarked Hattie. "My sister's name is really Catherine, you know, but we always call her Kate."

"Miss Beecher is strong-minded. I believe Kate does suit her better. In the play, *The Taming of the Shrew*, they called the heroine Kate until she was tamed, then they called her Catherine."

"Some nicknames suit people better than their real names."

"I think so," agreed Georgiana, "but my mother says nicknames are a silly fad. She thinks, even if a girl's name is Susanna Sophronia, she ought to be called by it."

"Don't tell her I call you Georgy," said Hattie in alarm. "I only do it when we're alone, and because I'm—I'm so very fond of you," she added shyly.

Georgiana gave her friend's hand a quick squeeze. "You can call me anything you like, Hattie."

"Which do you think suits me better: Hattie or Harriet? Hardly anyone at home calls me Harriet except my step-mother."

Georgiana pondered the question. "Well, you *look* more like a 'Hattie,' so little and meek; but now that I know you, I believe you're really a 'Harriet' inside."

"How do you mean?" asked Hattie eagerly.

"Oh, sort of quiet and sad, but strong, too. And very deep."

"Do you really think so, Georgy? *Me?*"

"Yes, really. You don't show it, but I think you're one of the deepest girls I've ever known. You have a sort of—a power—I can't explain."

Hattie was in a daze. No one had ever said such things to her before. But then she had never before confided in anyone, voiced her secret longings and ambitions as she had to this new friend. Could it be true that she had some deeply hidden power, that underneath the frail body and the unbecoming clothes, she was a Harriet? That name had become something to live up to.

As for Georgiana, her words were sincere. She had at first befriended the forlorn child out of kindness, but soon had learned to admire and love her. Georgiana had few close friends, but those she made were for life. She knew the

other students wondered at this new friendship, and suspected her of currying favor with the teachers, but she ignored the raised eyebrows. Those girls did not know Hattie as she did.

ON THE EVE of the new year, Hattie resolved to become a poetess. This lofty aim had been long in taking shape. For years she had dreamed of becoming rich and famous—rich, so that she could help poor Papa out of his financial straits, and famous, so that he could be proud of her, even if she was not a boy and a potential minister. Riches would also mean books and clothes, and above all, travel. Her small successes in writing had seemed to mean that there lay her talent, and the road to fame and fortune. She chose poetry because she loved it, not knowing how many of the world's great poets have starved to death.

Even had she known, it would not have altered her decision. For by now she was so steeped in Roman legend and poetry that some of it had to come out. She bought a half-dozen notebooks, and in her spare time began composing a mighty tragedy in blank verse.

The hero, named Cleon, was a favorite at the corrupt court of the Emperor Nero. He was rich, handsome as a god, a winner of Olympic games, but was frivolous, extravagant and irreligious. Then he came under the spell of Christianity, was a changed man, and died a martyr's death at the hands of Nero. This, at least, was the story Hattie had in mind, and it was entirely original, as none of the many great

novels with a similar plot had yet been written. Nor had she ever heard of the religious drama, but there she had its basic conflict—good against evil, with good eventually triumphant.

Two notebooks were filled, and part of a third, when Kate paid an unexpected visit to the neat hall bedroom. Hattie quickly laid aside her pen, and closed the book, but too late.

"What's that you're writing?" Kate inquired. "An English assignment, I hope."

"No, not English. It's just a—a little something of my own."

"Let me see," said Kate firmly, reaching for the notebook.

It opened at the scene where Nero tried to bribe Cleon into giving up his new-found Christianity:

NERO: *But we can put you in a post of honour,
So that all men shall wink upon thy will.*

CLEON: *My lord, I scarce can trust myself to answer,
Since I have heard such degradation named.
In place of open, bold apostasy
Thou dost propose an hourly, daily lie.*

"Is this a *play*?" cried Kate, in shocked surprise. "Where's the rest of it?"

Reluctantly, but with a secret thrill of pride, Hattie handed over the other notebooks. Kate flipped through the leaves impatiently, reading bits here and there, pausing at the descriptions of Cleon:

*Diversion is his labour, and he works
With hand and foot and soul both night and day.
He throws out money with so flush a hand
It makes e'en Nero's waste seem parsimony.*

*A perfect prince in entertainments!
Such show of plates and cups, both gold and silver,
Such flaming rainbows of all coloured stones,
Such wine, such music—*

Kate clapped the notebook shut. Her face was stern.

"Hattie Beecher, I'm surprised! You, of all people, writing a play! And with such a hero as this vile creature—extravagant, godless, and a drunkard! I don't know where you get such ideas!"

"But, Kate, you don't understand! I *had* to make him very wicked, because later I have him converted, and he dies a noble Christian martyr. You didn't read the best part. When Nero calls Christ a crazy Jew, Cleon says, 'I could bear to hear myself reviled, but not my Sovereign.' See, here it begins—"

"No, I don't wish to waste any more time on it. Think of the hours you've wasted, when I supposed you were studying. Why didn't you tell me about this?"

"I wanted to wait till it was done, and surprise you. I thought you liked poetry, Kate."

"So I do—*poetry*!" Then seeing Hattie's lips quiver, she went on more mildly, "When it's by a great poet, and in a book."

"You used to write it yourself, Kate. You know you did!"

"I wrote *verse*. I never flattered myself it was real poetry."

And what's worse, I even wrote a play once, when I was twelve. Ned and Will and I acted it out. I shall never forget it, though I'd like to."

"Did you, Kate? What was it about? Where was I?"

"You were just a baby. It was only some dramatized scenes from a storybook Mother had given us. She and Father were the audience. Ned spoke his lines too loud and fast, and Will couldn't remember his. It was a dismal failure, and Father made fun of us. We never tried such a stupid thing again."

"But my play isn't meant to be acted. Just read, like Byron's."

"So you see," Kate went on, "I wasted my time, too, when I had no goal in life. But now I realize the time is all too short to accomplish the good we were placed in the world to do."

"Mightn't it do some good, if I write a poem about a repentant sinner becoming a noble Christian martyr?" Hattie argued. "What if hundreds of sinners should read it, and repent?"

Kate suppressed a smile. "I hardly believe your influence could extend that far. No, you leave preaching to Father and the boys, and devote your time to things better suited to your talents."

"Writing poetry *does* suit my talents," said Hattie stubbornly. "Anyhow, it suits *me*. It's such fun. Kate, please don't make me give it up."

"Hattie," said Kate, after a thoughtful pause, "if I tell you what I have planned for you, it may change your atti-

tude. You want to be self-supporting, don't you, and not be a burden on Father?"

"Of course I do, but I thought if I could be a great poetess—"

"Silly girl! Now listen to me. I can't afford to hire another teacher, and Mary and I are overworked as it is. Next year the school may be larger, and I must find time to write some textbooks. So I'm counting on you to teach some of my classes!"

Hattie was staggered. "How could I? Why, the girls would be older than I am."

"They needn't know your age. What does it matter, if you know the subject and they don't?"

"Oh, dear! I don't know any subject that well."

"Nonsense! Look at Mary and me. We keep just two jumps ahead of some of our classes. You have a better memory than any of us. You can do it."

"What would you want me to teach?"

"Languages, probably. Your Latin is adequate. I mean to hire a tutor for you in French and Italian. And since you want to preach, you may take my class in Moral Philosophy."

"Oh, Kate! I couldn't!" wailed the shrinking girl.

"Oh, yes. You have the background for it, and Ned or Father can coach you this summer. Now here is what I want you to do, starting tomorrow, in *all* your spare time: Read carefully and outline the textbook you will use. It is Butler's *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*. I think that will keep you busy."

Hattie heaved a sigh. "All right, Kate, I'll try. But I don't know as I was ever cut out for a teacher."

"Anyone who likes books can teach. Just think, Hattie! At fourteen you'll be earning your own living, and besides, you'll be helping me in my life work, and furthering the cause of Female Education. What more do you want?"

Hattie wasn't listening. Hunched over her desk, she thought bitterly, "This is what it means to be a Beecher! Your life is all mapped out for you by somebody older, and you have to go *their* way. Will I ever have a chance to be myself, Harriet, and not 'Miss Beecher's sister Hattie,' or just 'one of the Beecher girls?'"

Kate was still talking. "And some day you'll thank me for setting you on the right path early. Don't look so woebegone, child. Remember Father's old rule: Obedience with a smile. Get your cloak and bonnet. I came to take you shopping with me."

"Shopping? For what?"

"Some material to make me a new spencer jacket—light-weight, for spring. Perhaps in bombazine."

"Must I wear my bonnet, Kate? This little old thing is so—so unstylish!"

"Wear it, by all means. No lady goes about the streets bareheaded. I had thought of buying you a new bonnet this spring, but now I've decided your French and Italian lessons must come first."

Hattie slowly donned her wraps, while Kate stood impatiently in the doorway.

"Make haste, Hattie, you look well enough. We'll choose

the material, and you can help me make my spencer. Won't that be fun? I was thinking of a tartan plaid, if I can find one without too much red in it. Dark blue has more dignity, I think, for a—Hattie, aren't you coming?" Kate was halfway down the hall.

The voice of her little sister was strangely muffled.

"Yes, Kate. I—I'm coming!"

V I I I

SORE AT HEART, Hattie put away the unfinished *Cleon*, and dutifully applied herself to the outlining of Butler's *Analogy*, thriftily using the blank pages of the third notebook for this purpose. As spring came on, she longed for the woods and streams of Litchfield, and Butler's arid pages often swam before her weary eyes.

The French and Italian lessons began, under the tutelage of a pleasant Frenchwoman, Miss Degan. This was Hattie's first contact with a foreigner, and she was thrilled, although it was hard to study two modern languages at once without mixing them. She dreamed of becoming a famous linguist, and travelling in Europe. With these new activities, she almost forgot her buried brain-child, *Cleon*, and when she re-read it months later, it seemed pretty feeble stuff.

The poetic urge, however, refused to die. As a Latin project she combined duty with pleasure by making a metrical translation of Ovid's *Elegiacs*. This turned out so well that parts of it were chosen to be read on Closing Day. It might

have won a prize, if Hattie had not been the Principal's sister, and if the Principal had not disapproved of prizes.

In June the girls returned to Litchfield. Hattie had looked forward eagerly to this home-coming, but after the first excitement wore off, she found things sadly changed. Or was it she who had changed? The village and the parsonage looked smaller and shabbier than she remembered them. Accustomed now to the blissful solitude of her own room, she disliked crowded quarters. Holly had been replaced by a hired woman, and there was a new baby brother, named Thomas.

The younger boys were still fond of her, but they had acquired new interests. Henry Ward was losing his lisp, but was no fonder of study, and was given to constant clowning. He now took delight in teasing Hattie, trying to make her blush. Charles, who at nine seemed to have finished with his chain of accidents, was still not robust. He was learning to play the violin, and spent hours each day making hideous squeaks and scrapings on Papa's old fiddle.

It was not a cheerful household. Mrs. Beecher and the baby were sickly, and Dr. Beecher was very busy. He was editing a religious newspaper (without pay, of course) and found he had to write most of it himself. No one seemed greatly impressed to hear that Hattie was to teach next term.

She was studying languages daily, and reviewing the *Analogy*, which she knew almost by heart, when Kate brought forth a new project.

"Girls," she said, "I've been thinking of another course we must offer."

Mary groaned good-humoredly, and Hattie, although pleased to be included in the conference, asked dubiously, "What, Kate? Not German?"

"No, indeed. Something far more useful. Now I ask you, what more deplorable sight than a young bride who speaks three languages, but can't sew or cook? She must learn her profession of home-making by the trial and error method. So I mean to introduce a course in Household Economy."

This was indeed something new for a school in 1825.

"You can't mean to teach *cooking*, in school?" Mary was aghast.

"Why not? Doctors don't learn medicine by experimenting on their patients—or at least, they've had some schooling first. Girls should be taught cooking, sewing, marketing and keeping household accounts. Also, home decoration, nursing, care of infants, child training—"

"Hold on, Kate!" cried Mary. "That isn't just a course, it's a lifetime study. And what do you and I know about such things?"

"We know more than our pupils, I daresay. Most of them couldn't boil an egg properly. We can at least impress them with the dignity and importance of woman's natural calling. If we had a kitchen—"

"We ought to have a science laboratory first, Kate. It's hard to teach Chemistry and Botany just from books. I imagine those experiments would be horribly smelly and messy, but in a separate room they might be great fun."

"You're right, Mary. We *must* have more space. I shall draw a plan of a model school building, but first I want to

assemble material for this household textbook. Cooking is most important."

"I suppose that means recipes?" asked Mary, with growing interest.

"Yes. You and I will go to all the ladies of Litchfield, and get their best recipes; then, Hattie, you may copy them."

"We'll do it," said Mary cheerfully. "Learn something practical for a change. After all, Hattie and I may not be teachers all our lives," she added with a meaning smile.

Hattie saw it, and was all agog. "Mary, you don't mean—you haven't got a suitor?"

Kate answered for her, rather sharply. "Certainly not. Mary wouldn't leave me in the lurch, just when I need her most. I will admit that a certain gentleman of Hartford seems to find your sister attractive, but Mary is too sensible a girl to have her head turned by masculine flattery. Now about this cookbook . . ."

Hattie copied recipes that summer until she felt as if her head would turn to a pudding, and her writing arm to calves' foot jelly. Little did she dream that her sister's daring innovation, a course in Household Economy, would be acclaimed and imitated all over the country, or that a few years later, *Miss Beecher's Cook Book* would be a "must" for every American bride's library.

While Hattie's hands were busy, her mind was often lost in a dream world, envisioning the glories of ancient Rome and Greece, that fair land for which Byron had died. Her fancy peopled the fields and glades of Connecticut with shepherds and shepherdesses, nymphs and dryads and fauns.

Henry's willow whistles were the pipes of the shepherd god, Pan, and she was a maiden of Athens. Her thoughts took form in the rhythmic patterns of the classic poets.

There was no one to share these thoughts, but she wrote long letters to Georgiana, composing them mentally in the midst of the Beecher confusion. Her dreamy abstraction annoyed the family. It was "Hattie, your wits are wool-gathering again," or "Hattie! Your mother is speaking to you!" Henry teased, "Hattie acts like she's lovesick. Better eat some pickles, Sis." Kate was alarmed.

"Father," she said, "I wish you'd speak to Hattie. She doesn't know where she is half the time. She shouldn't form such bad habits."

Dr. Beecher lost no time in giving Hattie a lecture.

"Reverie," he concluded, "is a delightful intoxication of the mind, but as insidious as intoxication by liquor. I once knew a man who would retire into the garden of reverie whenever he wished to break the force of an unwelcome truth. I told him he *must give up* this pernicious habit, or *be damned!*"

Reproof from Papa had always hurt, and now Hattie was unduly sensitive. Choking back a sob, she rushed from the room, and into the garden, where she relieved her feelings by furiously pulling weeds, and watering the cabbages with her tears.

"Everything I do is wrong," she thought resentfully, "and everything Kate does is perfect! Papa's proud of her because she's doing important things, but where would she be, I'd like to know, if she hadn't inherited that money, and

didn't have all of us to help her? No, that's unjust. Kate works terribly hard, and she's very unhappy. Oh, well, when I'm Kate's age, and rich and famous, Papa will have to be proud of me, too. I'll show him! I'll show 'em all some day!"

WHEN the older boys came home, a family council was held to discuss finances, which were at a new low. Edward had saved enough money to go to Andover and prepare for his ordination, but that would leave George to struggle alone through Grammar School.

"I'll go to Hartford," offered William, "and try to get a job. I'm not much use to anyone, but George has a future, and I'll gladly help him if I can."

Everyone agreed that Will would be better off in Hartford, but George insisted he should also work part time. Of course Ned must go on with his theological schooling.

As the children planned, Lyman Beecher listened sadly. His dream of seeing all his sons in the pulpit was still a long way from being realized. Now there was another son, little Tom. There might be more. . . .

"Children," he said, "your father will be fifty years old in October. I'm starting on the down slope. Over a quarter of a century in the pulpit, and I've never yet commanded a salary of more than eight hundred dollars, and seldom got all that! The cost of living increases, my family increases. It's high time I did something about it."

"What will you do, Father?" they chorused.

"I intend to ask the parish for a hundred-dollar raise!"

"Oh, no!" they cried, all talking at once. "It isn't enough." "You're the most noted preacher in New England." "Yes, in all America. You're wasting yourself here." "Why not go elsewhere?"

"I've thought of that," their father replied. "I once swore never to leave Litchfield while my friend Judge Reeve was alive, but he's gone now. The parish isn't what it used to be. I have enemies now who would unship me if they could. I'm staying, just to fight 'em."

"You should be fighting in a better cause, Father," said Ned.

"Up in Boston," suggested Will, "the Calvinist churches are losing ground, and the Unitarians are gaining. You could do great good in Boston, and maybe some of us could go to Harvard."

"Harvard!" snorted Dr. Beecher. "That godless institution? No son of mine shall ever enter its doors. But those heretical Unitarians will take all of New England, if we let 'em. Hm-m! Tell you what I'll do. I'll strike the parish for *two* hundred dollars."

"Do you think they'll give it to you, Papa?" asked Hattie, marvelling at her father's bravery.

"No! And if they don't, I'll start looking around."

In spite of all this talk, the children could not imagine their father anywhere but in Litchfield. He had been there so long.

"Father's got a lot of fight in him yet," remarked Ned to Kate when they were alone. "But I wonder how well he'd

suit a Boston congregation. They might think him a bit quaint and rustic, you know, the way he says 'natur' and 'creetur.' "

"Yes, and the way he keeps pushing pair after pair of spectacles up onto his forehead," smiled Kate. "But say what you will, he's the best preacher I've ever heard. No one can make me feel as Father does. He inspires both the mind and the heart. Being with him this summer has done me more good than a rest cure."

"You look fagged, Kate," observed her brother. "Are you getting enough outdoor exercise?"

"Not outdoor, perhaps, but I've done your exercises with the students every day, and invented some new ones. Ned, I've made a great discovery; exercises go much better with *music*!"

"Music?" Ned considered it gravely. "Might be all right, just so it doesn't come to resemble dancing. But I know what would be better for you—horseback riding. Every morning before breakfast. It's very fashionable now, too. You and Mary could conduct the young ladies on riding parties."

Kate promised to think about it, but secretly thought she had enough worries without that. Still, introducing some recreation might improve the school. . . .

August was wet and dismal, and Hattie, weary of the house and of the mischievous antics of two-year-old sister Bella, undertook a sewing project all her own. Mrs. Beecher found her ripping the full, gathered skirts of her dresses from their tight bodices, and cutting out great strips.

"Mercy me, Harriet!" she exclaimed in dismay. "What *are* you doing? Your only dresses!"

"I'm making the skirts narrower, Mama. They look so bunched with all these gathers. The girls in Hartford wear narrow skirts."

"But surely they'll be too skimpy now. Such a waste of material!"

"Oh, no. The papers say skirts are to be even narrower this year. With these strips I've taken out, I'll make ruffles around the bottom. They'll lengthen the skirts, and make me look taller. You see, I'm going to teach, and I want to look very dignified."

It would take more than a ruffle to do that, thought Mrs. Beecher, but she only said, "Very well. If there's any material left over, I can use it in making rugs."

There was nothing to cut over for Hattie that year, and two or three dresses were considered an adequate wardrobe for a schoolgirl. But she *did* want a spencer. Everybody had at least one, even Kate. Aunt Esther came to the rescue with a length of bottle-green merino and some black velvet trimming, almost like new. From these Hattie made a most elegant spencer. With Mary's help, she concocted some dye, and made the blue dress a sedate plum color. Now she would feel more grown-up, and just a little more stylish.

The summer had been rather disappointing, and Hattie was not sorry when it was time to return to Hartford, and dear Georgiana. It was just as well she did not know that this was her final farewell to Litchfield. For that winter Dr. Beecher *did* move to Boston.

I X

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD Hattie began her teaching career in a small way. Kate had decided she should take only the class in Moral Philosophy. As the time for her debut approached, Hattie grew very nervous.

"I do wish I were bigger, Kate," she complained. "I'm not even five feet tall."

"That makes no difference," Kate encouraged her. "Not if you know your subject. Being a minister's daughter, you realize the importance of religious instruction. So be earnest and dignified, and stick to the book."

Hattie felt surer of the book than of her dignity.

"Do you think the girls ought to call me 'Hattie'? I might feel more teacherish if they didn't."

"You're still a student, too, so we can hardly expect them to address you as 'Miss,' but they should at least say 'Harriet.' We must all try to forget your childish nickname."

'Harriet's' knees trembled as she faced her first class, but there were many strange faces, and that fact, along with the new bottle-green spencer she was wearing, gave her courage. The first day went very well, and as she gained confidence, the task grew easier. The new girls called her 'Miss Harriet,' and treated her with great respect. All this was stimulating, and gave her an unaccustomed sense of power, but it set her apart from the others, and she would have been lonely except for her faithful Georgiana.

The two girls often walked to the edge of town, and sat on the high bank of the Park River, looking out across the open country. One golden afternoon, when the landscape glowed in autumn colors, they reclined, in pensive mood, against the broad trunk of a giant oak tree.

"This is such a peaceful, dreamy time of year," mused Georgiana contentedly. "Nature has finished its growing and flowering, and is making ready to sleep."

"I love autumn," sighed Hattie, "but it always makes me sad. It's the death of summer, and all the leaves and flowers."

"But we know there'll always be another summer," her friend consoled. "The trees will put out new leaves."

"But think how many lovely flowers are withered and gone forever, when they've hardly begun to bloom. Georgy, I often think I'll be like that—die young, I mean, before I've truly lived, or accomplished anything. Life is so short!"

"Oh, don't talk so, Hattie. You're growing morbid. I predict you'll live to a ripe old age, and do lots of splendid things. Let me read you a lovely poem about autumn that I clipped from a magazine. It's by a new English writer named Shelley."

She drew from her pocket the *Ode to the West Wind*, and read it through, lingering on the closing lines: "Oh, Wind, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

"Lend it to me, will you, Georgy? I want to copy it in my scrapbook." Harriet took the poem, and re-read it thoughtfully. "This isn't just a poem about autumn, it's a sort of writer's prayer. 'Make me thy lyre, even as the forest

is . . . ' Funny he should pray to the wind instead of to God . . . I like this:

*Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth.
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind.
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy. . . .*

That's the way I feel, Georgy! What I long for most is to have my words scattered like leaves among mankind—to be 'the trumpet of a prophecy!' "

The girls read and dreamed until the sun was low. As they reluctantly rose to leave, Georgiana said, "This is a beautiful spot. I'd like to have a cabin here under these big oak trees, and stay until the first snowfall."

"You know what?" said Hattie suddenly. "Someday, when I'm old and rich and famous, I'm going to build me a house on this very spot, and end my days here. You must come and stay with me."

Georgiana smiled at this childish fancy. "By that time you'll have forgotten all about Hartford, and me."

"Dear Georgy! As if I could ever forget you! Wherever I am, I'll come back, and build my dream house here. And that's a solemn vow!"

THE SCHOOL had outgrown its quarters again, and was now housed in the basement of a church. Besides the

customary "frill" subjects of Music and Drawing, the courses offered that term included Latin, History, Arithmetic, English Composition, Botany, Moral Philosophy and Household Economy. Kate hoped soon to add French and Italian, Chemistry and Higher Mathematics. But they simply *must* have more space. Sixty girls all in one room, with two groups reciting at once, and others trying to study, made too much confusion. And how could one teach science properly without a laboratory?

Kate drew up the plans for her ideal school building, and took them to an architect, who estimated the cost at the staggering sum of five thousand dollars. Regretfully, she laid the plans away, and applied herself furiously to improving school efficiency. She invented and tried out new schemes: the honor system, supervised study, special aids for slow students and student government—all of which are in use today.

"There ought to be some way of inducing girls to stay in school a full year at a time," she mused. "They attend merely by terms, and are continually dropping in and out, so that they accomplish nothing. If only we could have a graded course of study, and give diplomas, as the men's colleges do!" But the time was not yet ripe for women's colleges.

Then there was the matter of the girls' health. They needed some recreation that would take them outdoors. Kate thought again of horseback riding. But first she herself must learn to ride. She quietly made arrangements with a nearby riding academy, and engaged a seamstress

to make riding habits for herself and Mary. She would learn to ride fashionably and well, or die in the attempt!

Riding was a somewhat hazardous sport for the women of that day, because side-saddles were the rule. With only one foot in the stirrup, one knee hooked about the saddle-horn, and yards upon yards of skirt concealing her feet, a girl might look graceful—or at least, ladylike—but she could easily be thrown, and it required great skill to ride without bouncing.

One Saturday the stables sent around two horses for Kate's approval.

"Are you quite sure they're gentle?" she asked the groom.

"Oh, yes, Ma'am. Gentle as lambs. This one is named 'Music,' and the other, 'Dancing.' Best in the stables, Ma'am."

Kate dubiously eyed the bay mare with the frivolous name.

"She doesn't really dance, I hope?"

"Oh, no, she's just frisky at times. Wouldn't harm a fly."

Kate had meant to surprise Mary, but Mary, in turn, surprised her by flatly refusing to mount either horse. All Kate's arguments were of no avail.

"You can risk your neck if you like, Kate, but I'll stick to my books, thank you. Hattie's the outdoor girl. Let her ride the skittish little mare. She'll love it."

So it was Harriet who wore the new blue riding habit, cut down to fit her, and rode the bay mare named Dancing. It meant getting up very early, and dressing twice before breakfast, but she did love it. The worst part of it

was the costume—that heavy, extra long skirt, which must be held up in walking, and the heavy, stiff top-hat, which never would stay in place.

“You should tie it on with a large face-veil,” advised Kate. “That would protect your complexion, too.”

“Oh, no! I love to feel the wind in my face,” replied Harriet. “Why do we have to wear such ridiculous clothes? Don’t you wish we could ride astride, like the men?”

“I can’t imagine anything so unladylike. You’re doing very well, Harriet. You’ve been thrown only twice. But we really should get you a quieter horse.”

“Don’t blame the horse, Kate. Blame the silly side-saddle. If it weren’t for that, I’d never have been thrown at all. I like my little mare. But I do detest side-saddles—and hats!”

Nevertheless, Harriet yearned for a new bonnet to wear to church; and soon her desire was unexpectedly fulfilled.

Dr. Beecher came to town on business connected with his religious paper, and to inspect this Beecher school, which was proving to be, as he had hoped, of a higher order.

“We’ll have a sort of family reunion,” said Kate. “We’ll ask Will and George, and all dine at the hotel. For the prestige of the school, we must be seen in the most fashionable spot. And Hattie, you must have a new bonnet.”

So, for the first time, Harriet tasted the feminine delights of hat-shopping. She tried on countless creations, but it was hard to find anything reasonably priced, stylish, and becoming to a small girl. For hats were enormous that year, and lavishly trimmed. The newspapers poked all manner of fun at the ladies’ headgear, and printed letters from dis-

gruntled gentlemen, who complained they could never see anything at a public gathering, except overlapping rows of hatbrims, and towering feathers. The ladies, of course, gave no heed to masculine opinion in such matters.

Kate at last decided on a rather plain brown velvet poke bonnet, faced with coffee-colored velvet, trimmed with bows and shirrings of coffee-colored satin, a wreath of purple roses and one ivory-white ostrich tip. It was really quite conservative.

"You can use these trimmings for years, putting them on other bonnets," said thrifty Kate, "and brown won't soil easily."

Brown was not Harriet's most becoming color, but she felt very elegant and grown up in this huge creation; and its first wearing, at the family dinner party, was a great event.

Dining out, not a common practice in those days, was a rare luxury for any Beecher, and this was Harriet's first experience. Kate took charge of all details, however, leaving her free to enjoy the bright lights, the bustling waiters, and the air of social gaiety. She admired the well-dressed ladies, while fingering the satin ribbons of her new bonnet, and hardly listened to the conversation of her elders.

Dr. Beecher was well pleased with the progress of the school, but Kate still cherished the remote hope of a new building.

"Father," she asked, "do you suppose I could interest the men of Hartford in a building project, through a bond issue, or something?"

"I doubt it. Female Education is a new thing, and one that conservative business men won't care to invest in."

"Couldn't we work through the churches?" Kate persisted. "You have great influence. We could say that my school is concerned with developing moral character, which it is—"

"No, no," cried her father, "that would never do! You'd have the Old School Calvinists about your ears. They believe a person's character is foreordained—determined long before birth—and to presume to change it in any way would be heresy."

"How ridiculous!" fumed Kate. "Well, I'll think of some other approach. But I'll *have* that school building! Just wait and see!"

Interested as she was in Kate's building plans, Harriet had heard all this before, and was too busy feeling herself a lady to pay much attention. But her curiosity was aroused by her father's next words.

"I'm writing a series of articles on Colonization. Practically nothing has been done these past five years. The delay is disgraceful!"

"What's Colonization, Papa?" Harriet asked.

"It's a plan for deporting freed slaves to Liberia, in Africa, where they can set up a democratic colony of their own. A Society has been formed under the leadership of Henry Clay, and many humane persons in both North and South support it."

"How many Negroes have been sent to Liberia so far?"

"Only seven hundred!" answered Dr. Beecher in deep

disgust. "If that's the best we can do in ten years, the whole idea must go overboard. Yet it seems such an excellent solution."

"Just like the Promised Land, that Holly used to talk about," Harriet chimed in.

"But how can the freedmen have a democracy without trained leaders?" objected Kate. "We all know the South discourages Negro education."

"They should first be brought under the banner of the Church," said George. "There's great need of missionary work in the South."

"True," asserted Dr. Beecher. "The slave-holders prefer to think of Negroes as live stock, not human beings. And why? Because every Christian realizes the sinfulness of holding another Christian soul in bondage."

"Well, from what I've heard," drawled Will, "the chief difficulty is with the Negroes themselves. They just don't want to go to Liberia."

"That's only because they're uneducated," cried Kate. "They must be taught the meaning of freedom. What this country needs is more and better education for every living soul."

"Ah, yes! And those souls *must be saved!*" shouted Dr. Beecher.

The other diners turned to stare at the lively group in plain and shabby dress, and some observers smiled behind their napkins. They could not have suspected that they were gazing at half of what was one day to be the most famous family in America.

TIME slipped by uneventfully until February. Then two important letters arrived. The first was from Grandmother Foote:

Your Uncle Samuel is back from what he says is his last voyage. He is going to marry and settle down. The lady is Elizabeth Elliott of Guilford. She has consented to marry him only if he will give up seafaring. He is undecided where to settle, but may join your Uncle John out West.

This was disquieting news to the Beecher girls. Uncle Samuel had been the strongest link between them and their mother's family, and for him to leave both the sea and New England was unthinkable.

"He must be terribly in love with that woman, to give up seafaring for her sake," sighed Mary.

"Mark my words, he'll regret it," predicted Kate gloomily.

"I suppose he'll forget all about us, and we'll never see him again," said Harriet, wiping away a tear.

"Well, we don't see him often, as it is." Mary was trying hard to be cheerful. "At least we'll know he's safe on dry land. After all, it's only natural he should want a wife and a home."

The second letter was from Dr. Beecher. The Lord had heard his prayers for a better appointment. It was to be Hanover Street Church in Boston, and they would move in March.

Kate, reading aloud to her sisters, paused, and said sadly, "Girls, the old life is over and done." All three sat silent a long moment, saying goodbye to Litchfield, the only home

they had ever known, and to the dear, shabby old parsonage, where the unseen presence of their beloved mother Roxana pervaded every room. Then Kate read on:

Your Aunt Esther is a problem. She refuses to go to Boston, she refuses to be left behind, and is very gloomy about the whole arrangement. Maybe if you could find a small house in Hartford, she could come there and make a home for you girls, until she is reconciled to the change.

The girls stared at each other in dismay.

"We've been trying for years to persuade Father to make a change," said Mary, "but I'm sorry it had to be Boston."

"We can only hope for the best," sighed Kate, "and start looking for a house to rent. Hattie, do you want to go house-hunting with me tomorrow?"

Harriet was lost in a sad reverie, and had to be spoken to twice. Then she asked in sudden alarm, "Kate, will I have to give up my sweet little room?"

"Of course. It is yours only in exchange for the Bull girl's lodging at Litchfield. Now Aunt Esther is coming to make a nice home for all of us. Won't that be nice?"

"No!" said Harriet bluntly. "It will be simply dreadful, and you know it!"

"No use pretending, Kate," said Mary. "We love Auntie dearly, but she is a trial to live with—so painfully neat. Will you ever forget the time she was in charge at home, and the boys came tramping into the kitchen with muddy boots, and a pailful of live frogs?"

"Don't remind me," shuddered Kate. "We'll just have to

be as tidy as we can, and show her we appreciate all her hard work and care."

The only house Kate could find was a cottage with two bedrooms—one for Aunt Esther, and one for Mary and Kate. Harriet would be forced to sleep on the lounge in the sitting room.

"This will be only temporary, I'm sure," said Kate consolingly.

Harriet tried not to let the others see how much she cared. No longer to have a room of her own! It was a bitter blow.

"I'm doing this for Aunt Esther," she reasoned with herself. "Poor dear! She hasn't any home of her own. Perhaps I'll be a lonely old maid some day, and have to live with my brothers' families. . . . No, I won't either! I'll have some place of my own, if it's only a shack. I'll have dozens of cats, and the walls lined with books, and I'll write and read all day—maybe all night—and leave my clothes on the floor if I feel like it . . . ! But I must be nice to Auntie. She'll be homesick for Litchfield, too."

The last few nights in her little hall bedroom, Harriet cried herself to sleep. There were so many things to cry about, which had been piling up for weeks. Unpleasant happenings at school—her pupils' stupidity, Kate's criticisms; Uncle Samuel's going out of her life; Litchfield and all the dear, familiar things there lost forever; and now her sole refuge, her lovely private corner of the world, was no longer hers! She felt utterly dispossessed, adrift on an unfriendly sea.

The truth was, Harriet had entered that painful period of unrest, of emotional ups and downs, which all young people pass through. She was over-sensitive, dissatisfied with herself, and critical of others. Trifles affected her deeply, and her moods varied from day to day. She was filled with vague longings, lofty ambitions, and grim despairs. She often wept without knowing why. Even the thought of Heaven brought no solace, for now she was not certain of the destiny of her soul.

Some months before, obeying her father's instructions, Harriet had applied for membership in the Hartford Congregational Church. She had timidly presented her papers to the pastor, Reverend Joel Hawes, hoping he would not ask too many questions about her "conversion."

The worthy old gentleman read Dr. Beecher's note, and eyed the young applicant with grave severity.

"There seems some doubt, my child, as to your being among God's elect. Your readiness for salvation must be tested. Now, Harriet, tell me this: If the universe should be destroyed tonight, *could you be happy with God alone?*"

This appalling thought struck Harriet dumb, but at last she faltered, "Yes—I—I think so, sir."

But this was not enough. He went on, "You realize, I trust, in some measure, at least, the deceitfulness of your own heart; and that in punishment for your many sins, God might justly leave you, to yourself as miserable as you have made yourself sinful!"

His duty done, the Reverend Hawes enrolled her in his church, and sent her away, confused and unhappy.

She had tried earnestly to picture herself alone with God in a non-existent universe, but it was beyond even her vivid imagination. She was overwhelmed with a sense of her own insignificance and unworthiness. Her childish vision of a safe and pleasant Heaven with Mother was gone, leaving her to grope in cosmic darkness. She was to say in later life, with grim humor, "This lamb could not be allowed to enter the fold without first being chased all over the lot by the shepherds."

It was five years before Harriet could emerge from this morass of doubts and questionings, and return at last to Holly's way, the God of Love, and the simple, happy faith of her childhood. For the children of the Calvinists, this struggle was a part of the long process called "growing up."

X

WHEN school ended, one of Harriet's childhood dreams came true. She travelled by stagecoach all the way to Boston!

Kate decided to stay in Hartford that summer, to look after important school matters, but Mary and Harriet were to join the family in Boston. They planned the trip with eager anticipation.

"You could take the post chaise," said Kate, "and be there in less than twenty-four hours. It goes straight through, you know, stopping only for meals and a change of horses. It's fast, but rather expensive."

"Much more tiresome, though," said Mary. "All that jolting and jouncing, and no sleep. No, we'd better take the regular coach, and stop overnight at an inn. We're in no hurry."

The girls set out on Harriet's fifteenth birthday—a thrilling way to celebrate. Aunt Esther packed a lunch, and gave them a host of parting instructions about the conduct of young ladies travelling alone, without male protection.

"Auntie thinks I'm still a child," whispered Mary, amused. "I have travelled before, even if I've never been to Boston."

The sisters climbed aboard the great coach, the driver cracked his long whip, and they were off, rumbling and jolting over the cobblestones.

"This is really living," thought Harriet, as she looked down upon the heads of the poor pedestrians, who weren't going anywhere. But as the hours went by, it became evident that the coach, without benefit of rubber tires, shock absorbers, or spring-cushion seats, was far from comfortable.

"Boston is the cultural center of America," explained Mary. "It is larger and more interesting than New York. Just think of all the great, historic happenings it has seen! It's awfully aristocratic, they say."

"I wonder how Papa happened to be asked there," mused Harriet.

"He has a great reputation as an orator, you know, and through the sermons he has published. But I'm afraid he'll be out of place in Boston, after being a country parson all his life."

"Won't he miss the little farm? And where will he go fishing?"

Mary giggled. "Remember the time he caught the trout on his way to church, put it in his coat-tail pocket, and forgot all about it? Next Sunday Mama found the smelly coat—I shall never forget her face!"

Dr. Beecher seemed cheerful enough, however, when he met his daughters and took them to the new home—a tall, narrow house at 18 Sheaf Street, near Copp's Hill. There was all the familiar, shabby furniture, but the place seemed cramped and dreary. There was no garden, and scarcely any yard, and Harriet felt it could never seem like home.

Henry Ward, now thirteen and a Bostonian of three months, was eager to show Harriet the town. He had largely outgrown his childish lisp, but not his ambition to become a sailor. Most of his time was spent at the harbor. He knew the name and tonnage of every vessel there, and had picked up an amazing nautical vocabulary, of which he was very proud.

Harriet went with her brother to have her first look at the sea. She stood, awe-struck, on the wharf, while the damp wind whipped her skirts and tossed her chestnut-brown curls. Still, it wasn't as big as she had imagined. It was only a harbor, and filled with boats.

"'Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!'" she chanted from her beloved Byron. "But Henry, it isn't blue at all. It's gray."

"Some days it's bluer," said Henry wisely. "All accordin'

to what quarter the wind's in. Now you take when they's a sou'wester blowin' agin the tide, and ain't no fog—"

"Henry Ward! Such grammar! Where did you learn that dreadful sort of language?"

"I talk to the sailors and fishermen. D'yuh know, they think it's bad luck to whistle a jig at sea? Yessir! Brings on a storm. And if the new moon is layin' on her back, or carryin' the old moon in her arms, it means foul weather."

Harriet learned seven ways to predict a storm, the difference between a gull and a stormy petrel, what makes the black spots on the haddock's gills, and other useful knowledge.

"See that rope, hangin' on the lee'ard side of that three-master there? What d'yuh s'pose that's for, Hattie?"

"Don't call me 'Hattie.' Why, to climb aboard by, isn't it?"

"No, silly! That's the good luck rope. The sailors leave it there all during a voyage, so's their wives and sweethearts and the friendly spirits can grab a-hold of it, and pull the ship safe home."

Dr. Beecher, missing the outdoor life, was more restless than ever. He took long walks with Henry and the girls, showing them the sights of Boston, but to him the churches were more interesting than Beacon Street. His favorite spot was the old Copp's Hill Cemetery, where rested the great men of Colonial days.

The four Beechers lingered there one day by the graves of the Mather family. Harriet examined the tombstones with awe.

"'Increase Mather. Born 1639—died 1723,'" she read.

"He was pastor of North Church for nearly fifty years," Dr. Beecher explained. "Got the charter for Massachusetts Colony."

"Wasn't he president of Harvard, too?" asked Mary.

"Yes, but Harvard was a far better place in those days, under that great Puritan. He was head of both church and school in the foremost city of the Colonies. What a noble task his was!"

"Papa, here's a grave marked 'Cotton Mather.' Isn't he the one who wrote *Magnalia*?" How well Harriet remembered those Salem witches!

"Yes, he was the son of Increase, shared his father's charge at North Church, and took over when the elder died. Seventy-five years the Mathers served in one pulpit. That's as it should be with the Beechers. My mantle should fall on Ned, or George, but I—Henry Ward! *Stop climbing on those tombstones!* Have you no respect for the honored dead?"

Henry leaped to the ground, grumbling, "Oh, pshaw, Papa! Let's go some place where the sinners are buried."

In the pulpit next day, Lyman Beecher made the old burying ground a symbol of his faith, and sounded again his battle cry:

"Yesterday I stood by the graves of the Mathers," he intoned, after pushing up the third pair of spectacles, to the amusement of the congregation. "Looking back upon the early days of New England, I called the God of our fathers to witness that I will never give up this battle, until

the faith of the Puritans is vindicated, and accepted among their posterity!"

In his fight against the Unitarians and growing Liberalism, the odds were against Lyman Beecher, and he knew it. But he was soon to have reinforcements.

Edward, newly ordained, came seeking his father's advice. He had received a call to the fashionable Park Avenue Church there in Boston. Would it be wise to accept such an important charge as his first? Could Boston hold two Beechers? What he didn't dare imply was that, at twenty-two, he seemed about to outrank his father.

But Dr. Beecher showed only pride in his son's good fortune.

"Of course you'll take it, Ned. The Bostonians are ignoring me, but maybe the two of us can put a dent in their armor. Fact is, Ned, I need you here. I'm a sick man—nearly done for. I greatly fear I have cancer internal!"

Having often heard this before, Ned was not alarmed.

"It's just your dyspepsia again, Father. You're not getting enough exercise—not strenuous enough. Leave it to me. I'll find you something."

The "something" proved to be a wagon-load of sand, which Edward had dumped in the cellar. His father eyed it dubiously.

"Just what am I supposed to do with this?" he queried.

"Shovel it!" cried Ned. "Shovel it from one side of the cellar to the other, and back again. Splendid exercise! I'll bring a shovel, and we'll work together, while we plan our campaign against the hosts of Satan."

BACK in Hartford, Kate was battling, also—for her new building. She called a meeting of the City Council, and laid her plans before them. Not at all sure that higher education was a good thing for females—and certainly not to the extent of five thousand dollars—they turned her down. “But I’m not giving up,” Kate wrote her sisters determinedly. “I’ll get around the old fogies some way.”

In Boston Harriet, for the first time in her life, found herself with little to do. There was nothing to read but the *Boston Transcript*, nobody to talk to. Mary had grown surprisingly domestic, caring for the children, or in the kitchen trying out recipes from the Beecher cookbook. Henry was usually at the water front, but when Harriet wanted to go there with him, her stepmother objected.

“All those rough longshoremen on the docks, and the language they use,” she shuddered. “It’s no place for a lady. If you want something to do, Harriet, mind little Tom this afternoon, and *don’t* let him fall off the stoop again. It’s a mercy the poor child didn’t break a limb.”

Everything Harriet did was wrong, it seemed. Now there was no escaping to the woods or garden. The house depressed her, and her moody silences and absent-minded mistakes annoyed her father.

“There’s no sense in a young girl, without a care in the world, moping about like a soul in purgatory,” he complained. “Smile, Hattie! Show a little life!”

Harriet tried, but she overdid it. When she forced herself to talk and laugh, her voice was shrill, and grated on the nerves of her dyspeptic and irritable parent.

"Hattie, must you chatter like a magpie about nothing?" he would say. Or, "Child, your silly giggling will drive me distracted!"

Nobody understood her. From the depths of her desperation, she wrote to Kate:

I wish I could die young, and let the remembrance of me and my many faults perish in the grave, rather than live, a trouble to everyone.

Kate replied cheerfully:

You'll be all right when you get back to Hartford, and the society of the girls. The enrollment will be larger, and I have engaged Miss Degan to teach modern languages, but you are to teach advanced Latin (Virgil). Don't waste your time, study something—whatever you like—but I recommend you prepare yourself to teach Drawing.

But why Drawing? That was one of Mary's subjects. Could it be that Mary was leaving—was planning to get married? Now that she thought of it, Harriet had noticed that Mary had been receiving letters from that lawyer, Mr. Perkins, but who ever suspected there was a real romance, right under the same roof? She began to look at Mary with new interest and curiosity.

In fact, she stared at her sister with such intent and mournful gaze that Mary grew impatient, and scolded, "Hattie, is anything wrong with me? Then stop staring like a Gorgon! You make me nervous." Harriet burst into tears, and ran from the room.

Edward began to observe his little sister carefully, for here he recognized the interesting symptoms of a soul in stress. Sincerely eager to be helpful, he reflected that this would be a fine chance to practice his ministerial duties, and review some of the material learned recently at theological school.

"Look upon me as your spiritual adviser," he told Harriet "I can give both nourishment and discipline to your troubled soul." He drew her into long discussions of life, death and the hereafter. Edward did most of the talking, and sounded very earnest and wise, but he left Harriet more confused than ever.

She did confide to him her desire to become a writer, preferably a poetess, but he was not encouraging. "Writing, for a woman, is merely a pleasant pastime. Unless it be dedicated to some Christian purpose, it has no value. Now in your case, why not take up the writing of hymns?"

This advice seemed good, but inspiration was lacking. Harriet took out her pen and paper, but fell to sketching, instead.

THE SUMMER dragged by, and the girls at length returned to Hartford. The school business was booming. The enrollment was eighty-five, and Kate had a new scheme for promoting her building project. She had wisely decided to work through the women.

"Mothers want their daughters to have advantages they never had," she reasoned. "We must induce our patrons to

come to the school, and let them see how over-crowded we are. The girls need more social activity. So I plan to give a series of receptions, or teas."

Kate invested in a tea service, and a new dress for Harriet. It was a gray and yellow striped poplin, and very becoming, besides being her first really new dress. She wore it to church every Sunday, but at the school teas it was seldom seen. While Kate and Mary poured, Harriet was behind a screen, washing cups.

The ladies came in flocks, and Miss Beecher's Friday tea became an important social function. Kate worked subtly and well to interest the women in all phases of the school, and when the time was ripe, discussed the building plans in detail. There would be separate class rooms, a study hall, parlor, office, cloak room, laboratory-kitchen, a large auditorium-gymnasium, and living quarters for the teaching staff. It would be practical, complete and ultra-modern.

The women were enthusiastic. They organized committees, and put pressure on their husbands regarding the bond issue. They worked so well that by February, 1827, the bonds were all subscribed, the site chosen and the contract let, for the Hartford Female Seminary, Inc. Kate had won her battle!

This year riding had its place in the school program. Kate rode a gentle white horse named Rollo, and Harriet a handsome black one called Tinker, that had one disconcerting habit. He never permitted another horse to pass him, and must always be well out in front.

The first day the students rode with the teachers, Tinker,

excited by so much competition, took the bit in his teeth and bolted. Harriet was powerless to check him, and the frightened girls saw only a black streak disappearing over the hill. When at last they overtook the pair, a mile beyond, they found Tinker standing dejectedly by the roadside, but Harriet was still in the saddle, very pale, her hat resting on her back.

The riding class swarmed around with shrill cries: "Miss Harriet, are you hurt?" "Didn't he toss you?" "How did you stop him?"

Harriet, breathing hard, answered casually, "I forced him into the fence. He reared, and hit the fence so hard I'm afraid he's hurt."

"Who cares about the miserable horse!" cried Kate. "Are you sure you're all right?"

"Oh, yes, quite. You see, I forced him to the right, and as my feet were on his left side, I managed to miss the fence."

"You can thank your side-saddle for that," said Kate.

"But weren't you simply *terrified*?" squealed Polly Carver. "I know I should just have *died*!"

"I was frightened, a little," confessed Harriet, "but I was very busy trying to stay on. My form was nothing for you girls to imitate. I bobbed up and down like an apple."

The girls agreed that Miss Harriet had perfectly splendid horsemanship, and was just too brave for words! The story spread around school, and Harriet found the students looking at her with new admiration. She had at last done something to make the world take notice of her. It was not the

sort of triumph she had hoped for, but it was better than none, and lifted her spirits for weeks.

During the winter term, the busy routine was upset by the coming of Henry Ward, to attend a few classes at the Seminary. He was failing in Boston Grammar School, and it was hoped that, by working with his sisters, he might gain better preparation. He must live with the girls, of course, which meant he would occupy Harriet's lounge while she slept on a cot in Aunt Esther's room. Harriet bore this inconvenience with fortitude, for it would be fun, having her favorite brother there.

Henry was shy about meeting all those girls, but he had a bright idea. On his first appearance at the Female Seminary, "Ink," as he loved to call it, he proposed to dress in girls' clothes, and be introduced as "sister Henrietta." This prank appealed to Harriet, who provided the costume, even to three bunches of false curls to bob coquettishly beneath his bonnet brim. Henry's round, dimpled face looked well in this setting, and Harriet exclaimed, "You make a much better looking girl than I do!"

"Put on my clothes, and see how you'd look as a boy," Henry suggested. When she did so, and strutted about with a masculine air, he cried, "Well, shiver my timbers, Hattie! You look just like brother Charley."

Harriet was not sure this was a compliment, but the clothes felt so comfortable she hated to take them off. She wished she could go riding in pantaloons, just once. But it was school time, so she quickly changed, and off they went, "Henrietta" mincing along by her side.

Of course Georgiana had to be let in on the joke, for she knew all about the Beechers. But the other girls were completely taken in by the disguise, which put Henry quite at ease. As the girls gathered around to meet this plump, pretty stranger, he chatted and laughed in a voice which sounded peculiar at times, for it was beginning to change.

When Kate thought the masquerade had gone on long enough, she removed the bonnet and curls before the astonished eyes of the students, and made explanations. But the ice was well broken, and Henry was a great success with the girls. He gained an enviable reputation with them as a wit, if not as a scholar, often convulsing the Latin class with his puns, like pronouncing *pigris*, "lard." "Well, lard is pig-grease, isn't it?" he would say, with a grin.

As in the old days, it was Harriet's duty to tutor her brother, and it was she who showed him the sights of Hartford. As a confirmed Bostonian, Henry didn't think much of this small town, without any ocean.

"I do wish Uncle Samuel hadn't turned landlubber all of a sudden," he said disgustedly. "I was planning to run away, and ship out with him as cabin boy. But now I s'pose I'll have to go through Grammar School, and it'll be like rowin' agin the tide."

Henry liked the Museum of Natural Curiosities, although he was careful to point out that Boston had a much bigger one.

"The Boston Museum has a big lecture room," he explained at the supper table one evening, "only sometimes instead of lectures, they have plays. Papa says it's only a

playhouse in disguise, and won't let us go near the place. I'd like to see a play once."

"When Mr. Perkins was in New York, he saw one," said Mary. "It was a Shakespeare play, and an actor with a Latin name was in it—Junius Brutus Booth, I believe it was. Mr. Perkins said he could see nothing objectionable about it—thought it very fine."

"Is it possible," pondered Harriet, "that Papa could be wrong about the theatre? If nice people like Mr. Perkins make up the audience, and the play is Shakespeare or Scott's *Marmion*, then what can be so evil about it? It must be the actors. But Papa doesn't know any actors. Anyway, they're people—God's children. Papa said Byron was wicked, too, but he couldn't have been, really. He was just lacking in Christian purpose. Maybe the theatre is that way, too."

Henry was teasing Mary. "Are you going to marry this Mr. Perkins I hear so much about? Come on, Sis! Tell us, has he popped yet?"

Mary blushed, and Aunt Esther said severely, "Henry, don't be vulgar! Whether he has proposed or not is none of your business. He's a fine young man, and Mary could do much worse."

Mary's friendship with lawyer Thomas Perkins was never referred to as a romance, because it seemed to upset Kate. But Mary confided to her aunt that they were in love, and that he had proposed long ago.

"But has he spoken to your father?" demanded Aunt Esther.

"Yes, and Father seemed very pleased. But I just can't announce our engagement yet. It would seem like deserting Kate."

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried her aunt. "Kate's able to hire a teacher now. The reason it upsets her is because it reminds her of her own loss. But you must think first of yourself, and Mr. Perkins. The poor man can't wait forever."

Mary raised other objections. For one thing, every engaged couple must have a more or less private parlor for the "sitting up" period of courtship; and Mr. Perkins could not, with propriety, be asked into the sitting room, while some member of the family was sleeping there. Aunt Esther admitted this, but had a solution.

"Henry will be gone at the end of this term, and Hattie can keep to her cot in my room. You're twenty-one, Mary, and two old maids in this family are enough. You go ahead with the marriage plans, and I'll handle Kate."

"You're truly romantic at heart, Auntie," smiled Mary. "I wonder at your being single."

"I could have been married at eighteen, if I hadn't been so choosy—like the old woman hunting a straight stick. You'll be making a great mistake to put it off too long, Mary."

Mary took Aunt Esther's advice, and after Henry had returned to Boston, she announced her engagement. Thomas Perkins became a regular caller at the cottage, and neither Auntie nor Harriet minded having to share a room, since it was in the cause of true love.

Nights when Harriet lay wakeful on her cot, she could

hear the low voices of the happy pair in the sitting room. "I wonder what they find to talk about so much," she thought. "But of course, being a lawyer, talk comes easy to Mr. Perkins . . . I must learn to call him Tom . . . He's much nicer than those bashful louts that used to sit up with Mary Anne Bull. But if that was the best beautiful Mary Anne could do, what can I ever expect in the way of a beau? We'll miss Mary. Now there'll be no one to stand between me and Kate when she's in her critical moods. Will I have to take Mary's place at school? I can't! Oh, dear! Why do people have to get married?"

X I

SPRING VACATION was two weeks long that year; for Kate needed a rest, Mary and Thomas were house-hunting, and Aunt Esther wanted to give the cottage a good going-over.

"Kate," she said, "why don't you and Hattie go and visit your Grandmother Foote? She enjoys seeing you, and the change would do you good. You both look a little droopy, in spite of all my good boneset and sassafras tea."

"I'll be too busy with building details," answered Kate, "but it might be the best thing for Hattie. She's been difficult of late."

At first Harriet was not enthusiastic. "I was planning to do some things with Georgiana. I hardly saw her while Henry was here."

"Then why not take her along?" Aunt Esther suggested.

So it was arranged; and when she learned that Uncle Samuel and his bride would also be in Nutplains, she was ecstatic.

One fine April morning the two girls boarded the coach in a flutter of excitement over the journey and the prospect of a whole week together.

"Georgy, you'll love Grandmother," said Harriet, as they rattled over the rough turnpike. "Her house is filled with foreign treasures. And there's my Aunt Harriet—the one I was named after. She's read everything, and has books galore. I don't know what my new Aunt Elizabeth is like, but Uncle Samuel is wonderful." And she sang her uncle's praises for the next five miles.

Aunt Elizabeth proved to be a pleasant woman, but Harriet could not quite forgive her for taking Uncle away from the sea.

"If I were in her shoes," said Harriet, "I'd jump at the chance of going on voyages with him. But I guess she doesn't care for foreign travel."

"It must be almost like foreign travel," remarked Georgiana, "their going 'way out West to Ohio."

Samuel had combined business with pleasure on his honeymoon, and had visited his brother John, who had a prosperous business in Cincinnati, and was urging Samuel to join him.

"I rather think I shall," said Samuel. "The West is the land of opportunity, and Cincinnati—they call it the 'Queen City'—is bigger than Hartford, and has a great

future. Besides, it's far enough inland so I won't be tempted to go back to seafaring."

"But Samuel, isn't it very crude?" asked Grandmother. "Elizabeth tells me the hogs roam at will in Cincinnati."

"Mother, I've seen hogs in the streets of New York, too."

"And I've seen them in Boston," said Harriet. "Of course, it was near the outskirts."

"Those were exceptionally well-mannered hogs, no doubt?" smiled her uncle.

"Oh, quite! They even grunted with a Harvard accent."

"But seriously," Samuel went on, "I like Cincinnati because it is a frontier town. Connecticut is too tame for me. I want the thrill of seeing things grow, and helping build up this great country of ours. We can't leave that task to riffraff and vagabonds. It needs solid citizens, with culture. Don't imagine that Ohio is the jumping-off place. Why, over in Indiana, about a hundred miles to the west, they have a State University, seven years old! No, the East has no corner on culture, I can assure you!"

While Georgiana admired the curios, or discussed books with the ladies, Samuel Foote renewed acquaintance with his favorite niece, who had changed greatly in the past four years. He feared she was taking life and herself too seriously, even for a Beecher.

She told him all her troubles, real and imaginary, and while Samuel saw she was inclined to dramatize herself and her woes, he was none the less touched by her evident unhappiness.

"Well, what's to prevent you from becoming a writer,

if that's what you want?" he asked. "Just what sort of thing would you write?"

"That's another trouble. I don't know! I used to think poetry, but I guess I'm not good enough at that." She told him about her *Cleon*, while her uncle tried not to smile.

"You may have been over-ambitious then," he commented. "Better choose your subjects closer to home. Keep your eyes and ears open, study people as well as books, and write down your thoughts every day, just for practice. Then when you know what you want to say, you'll be more ready."

"But I'm so dreadfully busy, and life is so short," mourned Harriet. "Here I'm nearly sixteen, and nothing accomplished. I feel so weak, and useless!"

"Useless my eye!" retorted Samuel. "You're doing a fine thing there in Hartford. Look what Kate has accomplished since she was twenty-two. Built up the most progressive girls' school in America—famous all over the country. You should be proud to be a part of it."

"I am proud, in a way, but it's all Kate's. I want to do something of my very own. Can't I ever live my own life, and not somebody else's?"

Samuel was silent a moment, then he said gently, "I know, Little One. Life is full of compromises, for all of us. But we can learn to make them, without losing sight of our goal. Living is a challenge—an adventure! The greatest adventure of all, except death."

"To me, life seems very sad sometimes."

"I don't see it that way. We see only what we're looking

for, and you, Harriet, are looking for the shadows. That reminds me of an old sundial I once saw in Venice. Carved on it was a Latin inscription: *Horas non numero nisi serenas*. You know what that means, I'm sure."

"*Horas non numero* . . . I count only the hours . . . *serenas* . . . serene or fair—"

"Sunny," Samuel corrected. "A sundial, you know, can function only in sunshine. Wouldn't that make a good motto for you, Hattie?"

"Oh, yes! That's splendid. I count only the sunny hours! I must copy it in my scrapbook."

She did so, and wrote beneath it: "I have come to a firm resolution to count no hours but unclouded ones, and to let all others slip out of my memory as quickly as possible."

Dear, wise Uncle Samuel! He had given her a shield against life's stings—a weapon against melancholy.

THE YEAR 1827 was an eventful one for the Beechers. Edward became pastor of Boston's Park Avenue Church, George and William entered Yale, Kate got her new school building, and Mary became Mrs. Thomas Perkins. Aunt Esther moved on to Boston, for the girls now had living quarters at the school.

The fine new building of the Hartford Female Seminary was not fully equipped as yet, but it was usable. The enrollment exceeded the hundred mark, and there were three hired instructors. Kate's standards were high, and the fame of the school continued to grow.

It was Harriet's whole life. She lived, worked and played there, although play came seldom. She roomed with Miss Degan, and had no outside contacts. Her only escape was through books and daydreams, and the journal in which she wrote every night, as her uncle had advised. The close confinement with the same companions and feminine atmosphere sorely tried her nerves. She wrote:

I wish I could bring myself to feel perfectly indifferent to the opinions of others. The least slight or criticism renders me miserable for days and days. . . . All through the day, in my intercourse with others, everything tends to destroy my calmness of mind. One flatters me, another is angry with me, another, unjust to me. My faults are pointed out in such a way as to irritate, without helping me. . . . I will seek communion with Christ. He is a Friend who will not desert me, or become irritated, or impatient.

She remembered the words of Holly, the Negro, who walked so happily by God's side, holding His hand.

Up in Boston the outlook was gloomy. In spite of Lyman Beecher's thunderings from the pulpit on Sundays, and his vigorous shovelling of sand on week days, dyspepsia and Unitarianism still persisted. In fact, the Unitarians seemed unaware of his existence. How could he fight anyone who wouldn't fight back? Baffled, he turned to the sins of his own flock, and delivered his widely printed *Six Sermons on Temperance*, which had been so effective in Litchfield.

The response was not what he expected. His deacons, smiling coldly, informed him that most of his salary was obtained through the rental of the church basement to a

wholesale liquor dealer for storage, and that while he preached, he was standing directly over a thousand kegs of very useful rum.

Even the Boston press took notice, and denounced him as an eccentric old busybody, and an arch-Puritan bent on taking away all personal liberty.

"I'm beset fore and aft," Dr. Beecher laughed grimly, as he handed his sister the latest paper, with its vitriolic front-page editorial. "Anyhow, I've waked 'em up."

"Lyman, I told you no good would come of this change," bemoaned Aunt Esther. "I wish we were safely back in Litchfield."

"Don't talk like an old woman!" he retorted. "Here I'm getting two thousand dollars in cash, and a good stiff fight into the bargain. I've cracked their smug Boston complacency at last. Now what I need is men—young men—to help me. Ned will find me some."

Dr. Beecher soon gathered about him a group of serious, intelligent young men, who were attracted by his wit and magnetic personality as much as by his pulpit oratory. Of these, his favorite came to be an Andover graduate named Calvin Stowe.

Harriet, home on vacation, saw the young stranger one day leaving her father's study. "Papa," she asked, "who is that bulky young man with the large head and the country drawl, who was just here?"

"Calvin Stowe. That fellow's a wonder. Comes from an upstate village. Never had a penny, but worked his way through two colleges, and won distinction with his transla-

tions of ancient Hebrew. He's to teach at Bowdoin. Oriental Literature."

"He's certainly not handsome," said Harriet, "but he looks as if he had a sense of humor."

"He has," chuckled Dr. Beecher. "Drollest fellow I ever saw. He's chock-full of stories—the homespun kind us country folks can appreciate. A good churchman, too. I couldn't do without him."

Harriet was glad Papa had found someone who appreciated him in this big, unfriendly city. The next time Calvin Stowe called, she took a good look at him from behind the parlor curtains. Downright homely, she decided. Still, there was something about him . . . Maybe his connection with Oriental Literature (she hadn't forgotten *Arabian Nights*) lent him a peculiar fascination . . . Or maybe it was because he was a village boy, and poor, but had had the courage to do what he wanted, and win a name for himself already.

She listened in the hall to his voice—a Yankee voice, with slow, good-humored inflections—and his contagious, chuckling laughter, and smiled in sympathy. But she did not meet Calvin Stowe face to face, and when she returned to Hartford, she forgot about him.

THAT FALL Harriet became a full-time teacher at the Seminary. But she refused to take over Mary's subjects, as Kate had planned. For once, Harriet had her own ideas.

"I'd like to take all the classes in Composition and

Rhetoric," she announced. "I remember how Mr. Brace used to teach it at the Academy, and you know he was perfectly splendid. I'm sure I could do as well as that poor, stupid Miss Hawkes you had last year. And I'm sick of the Virgil class—teaching Latin poetry to girls who don't know Latin and couldn't appreciate poetry even in English. Please, Kate, let me try the Composition."

She had other arguments ready, but Kate agreed at once, admitting that it was probably what she was best fitted for. Harriet marvelled at how easy it had been to gain her point. But next time it was not so easy.

"Now that I'm a regular teacher, will I have a salary?" she ventured to inquire.

"No, that's quite impossible," replied Kate firmly. "I'm hiring four teachers now, and we need laboratory equipment badly. You may have a little spending money, as you need it, if you'll first tell me what it's for."

Harriet took this philosophically. She was used to poverty; and just then she was excited about her new roommate, Mary Dutton, who had come over from New Haven to teach Mathematics. She was almost as small as Harriet, with a neat figure, red-gold curls, a pert, turned-up nose, and dancing hazel eyes. She called everybody "darling," and could make even quadratic equations seem like fun.

Georgiana was spending the winter in New York, and Harriet would have been lost, except for Mary Dutton. The only trouble was, Mary was too popular. Men on the street turned to stare at her, and some managed to be introduced. So she often tripped away to social functions, leav-

ing Harriet to spend dull evenings with a stack of English compositions.

"Why did I ever want to teach English?" she groaned to herself one evening when Mary had gone to a party. "But then, even if I had no papers to correct, I wouldn't have any beaux. I'm not pretty and cute like Mary, but . . ."

She studied herself in the mirror, trying to discover why she was not attractive to young men. Certainly her features were neither pert nor cute, but they had classic regularity. Her face was nearly oval, the forehead broad, the dark blue eyes set very wide apart. Her nose (that Beecher nose which she so hated) was almost pure Grecian—long, but well shaped. Her mouth was generous, the full lips curved in a Cupid's bow; and the masculine firmness of the chin was offset by the large, wistful eyes, and glossy, dark-brown curls falling from a center parting to frame her face. Her skin was no longer tanned, but creamy; and the high curve of dark eyebrows gave character and strength.

"No, I'm not pretty," she sighed. "I look too much like a Beecher. Still, Kate and Mary both got engaged. My figure is improving. My complexion wouldn't be so bad if Kate would only let me put on a bit of powdered starch. What's wrong with me? I just lack something."

What Harriet could not learn from gazing into her mirror was that her face and body were so expressive of her moods as to give her several distinct personalities. When she was thoughtful, tired or sad, her shoulders sagged, her mouth drooped, her eyes grew dull, and she seemed withdrawn from the world about her. When in a crowd she

wrapped herself in a cloak of invisibility, and looked and listened. Nothing escaped her; and when she spoke, her remarks were brief and to the point, causing people to look at her in surprise. They had forgotten she was there.

But when Harriet was excited or gay, or with a single, sympathetic listener, the words came pouring out, her eyes sparkled with fun, or glowed with feeling. She became radiantly alive from head to toe, and actually seemed inches taller. Then people thought in amazement, "Why, she's beautiful: I never noticed before." With a mind and body so responsive to the color of the spirit, she would inevitably have become an actress, had she been born a century later, and of different parentage.

But she was Lyman Beecher's daughter, with no outlet for her talents, and with no social life. So all she could do was bluntly present her problem to Mary Dutton, when she flew in, flushed and excited, to recount the evening's gayeties.

"Mary, do you know I've never been to a real party, or had a beau in my whole life? What's wrong with me? Tell me, frankly. I want to know."

Mary tossed her slipper bag in the corner, and plopped down on Harriet's bed. "Why, darling, there's nothing wrong with you—*really* wrong. But you're hard to get acquainted with. You never say anything in a crowd—just look at people as if you're sizing them up—and naturally, they wonder what you're thinking."

"It might surprise them sometimes, if they knew."

"That's just it. You seem so critical. And if you do like

anyone, you don't show it. A girl has to make a big fuss over men, else they're afraid of her."

"Are men afraid?" asked Harriet in surprise. "I thought I was the one to be timid."

"Of course they are. And they're terribly scared of brainy women. Harriet, I didn't mean to tell you this, but since it's come up, maybe it will show you what I mean. Tonight I tried to arrange an invitation for you, to go to the church festival with one of Nat's friends. Here's what he said: 'One of those Beecher girls? Oh, no, not that bluestocking! I'd be frightened to death of her.' I told him you were only seventeen, and a perfect dear, but it was no use. He has the idea you're about twenty-five, and just oozing knowledge."

"What's a bluestocking?" Harriet tried to sound casual.

"A very, very intellectual young lady, who uses words of six syllables, and never knows when her petticoats are showing." Then, seeing the stricken look on Harriet's face, she added hastily, "Of course you aren't like that, but it just goes to show, you must never let the boys suspect you have a brain."

Harriet jabbed her quill pen viciously through a student paper. "Well, if being popular means I'd have to chatter like a magpie, and pretend to like stupid people—I just can't! And I won't!"

"Oh, darling, don't be angry! You wanted the truth. Who cares what the silly boys think? I think you're sweet, and awfully good company when you try to be. So try a little more, won't you?"

"I may as well resign myself to being an old maid."

"Oh, no, you'll marry a minister some day, or a nice, substantial college professor, and live happily ever after." Mary said this only to be kind. Secretly, she doubted it.

"I wouldn't care so much about a future husband," sighed Harriet, "if I could only have a little fun *now*!"

Long after Mary was asleep, Harriet lay tossing, and thinking bitterly, "Another penalty of being a Beecher! I'm labelled as a bluestocking and a bore by people who don't even know me! To be a writer, one must observe people; and then they think you're critical, and don't like you. . . . I'm always, always a misfit! First I was too young to join in the good times, and now it seems I'm too old. Have I skipped youth altogether?"

"Marry a college professor . . . ?" The forgotten image of Calvin Stowe flashed vividly before her mind's eye. "He's substantial enough in looks, but not my idea of Prince Charming. Still, he's so intellectual he wouldn't be afraid of a girl who prefers Latin poetry to French novels—or would he? What do I know about men? I never meet any. Perhaps they're shy, too—and lonely.

"I shall probably never marry, and I know I'll never be popular. But I can try to like people more, and be more friendly. . . . God is Love. . . . I must try to dwell in Love, and not grow old inside, or bitter. . . . *Horas non numero . . . nisi serenas. . . .*"

Harriet fell asleep, with one lone tear entangled in her long, dark lashes.

Part III

DARK
BORDER
LAND

1830-1836



PART III

D A R K

B O R D E R-

L A N D

1830-1836

X I I

ANOTHER year passed, bringing no greater event to the Beechers than the birth of one more child—a son named James. But events were in the making which would bring momentous changes for them all.

The Fates, seeming to favor the Boston Unitarians, conspired against Lyman Beecher with a grim sort of humor. In February, 1830, his church burned to the ground. The unfavorable publicity given his temperance sermons had made him enemies in unexpected quarters. When the firemen hastened to Hanover Street, and saw what was on fire, they refused to pump. Instead, they joked, and shouted, "Let Beecher's old jug burn!" and "Glory Hallelujah!"

It was an amazing sight. The jugs of rum in the basement exploded, scattering clouds of tracts and pious pamphlets high in the air, while the blue flames of burning alcohol poured from the lower windows. Some wit in the crowd composed a couplet:

*While Beecher's church holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.*

Small boys took it up, and chanted it with glee, while capering and kicking about the churchly literature. The spectators, who had never seen such a fire, had a glorious time.

Next day the despairing deacons of Hanover held a council. It appeared that the fire had started in the basement. Could it have been the liquor jugs? Was this the hand of a wrathful Providence? But they agreed that if Dr. Beecher hadn't made so many enemies, the church might have been saved. They expected him to be chastened, bowed down with remorse. Some even muttered darkly of letting him go.

But when he bounced in, he was blithe as a cricket. "Well, gentlemen, our jug's broke!" he observed cheerily, and launched at once into plans for rebuilding. The deacons took hope, and forgot all about dismissing him. He must stay to help them out of their predicament.

Nevertheless, he and Edward were both on the point of admitting defeat in Boston.

"I'm not sure," Ned told his father, "but what Kate has chosen the best of all callings. Her influence will prove far greater than mine. Perhaps I shall go back to teaching."

"Oh, Ned!" groaned Dr. Beecher. "After our long strug-

gle to place you in the pulpit, you aren't thinking of leaving it?"

"I've been offered the presidency of a new college in Jacksonville, Illinois—"

"What? That remote outpost of civilization?" cried his father.

"By getting in on the ground floor, I can carry out my own ideas, and accomplish great things," argued Ned. "I might continue preaching, too, as the Mathers did."

"I know how you feel, Son," said Dr. Beecher. "I'd be tempted to do the same thing, if I were younger. Maybe it's the Lord's will."

But he was more hurt by Ned's departure than he would admit. In the end, he thought sadly, George would be the only one left to lean upon.

The younger boys, also, were becoming a problem. Gentle, studious Charles was taking an alarming interest in music. As a self-taught violinist he had made remarkable progress, but now he was pleading for regular lessons, and courses in Harmony. His father refused, pointing out that music was merely an agreeable hobby, not a purposeful career, but Charles was unconvinced. He continued to study and practice alone.

As for Henry Ward, he was bent on going to sea. In desperation, his father hatched a scheme.

"Henry Ward, if I allow you to go on a voyage this summer, will you settle down and finish Grammar School next year?"

To this Henry agreed. But his father, in arranging for

his berth on a coastwise merchant ship, spoke to the skipper.

"You needn't kill the lad outright," Dr. Beecher told him, "but I want him to get so sick of sailing he'll never go near water again."

So poor Henry was given the works. This voyage was far different from his dream of going to China as Uncle Samuel's cabin boy, and he was often seasick. He returned to Boston with blistered palms, sore muscles and a vast disillusionment. By the time he had learned of the trick played upon him, it was too late. He had decided to become a lawyer, like Thomas Perkins.

While Henry made his first and last voyage, Harriet was spending the summer pleasantly with Grandmother Foote. She was happier in the village life of Nutplains than she had ever been in Boston. She could roam the countryside, write or browse through Aunt Harriet's library. No one scolded or criticised her. She even took a small part in the social life of the village, where nobody knew she was a teacher, or if so, did not seem to mind. In one of her many letters to Georgiana she wrote:

I am trying to give up the pernicious habit of meditation and to mix in society, cultivate a spirit of kindness toward everybody. Instead of shrinking into a corner to notice how other people behave, I am holding out my hand to all who will be acquainted with me. From these friendships I expect little, therefore generally receive more than I expect. From past friendships, I have expected everything, and have been disappointed. The kind words and smiles I call forth by smiling are not much in themselves, but they form a very pretty flower border to the way of life.

Georgiana was pleased over her friend's new effort at sociability; but when Edward, still her spiritual counselor, learned of it, he suspected selfish motives and insincerity. Her desire to be loved he attributed to her reading of worldly literature, and felt duty-bound to warn her that reading and writing, except on sacred topics, was one of Satan's wiliest snares for mortal feet. To this Harriet replied in a way that left him no argument:

It is true that things most lovely and poetical have often been laid on profane altars. But I do not mean to live in vain. God has given me my talents, and I will lay them at His feet. All my powers He can enlarge.

This was to be her lifelong creed. The years of emotional growing pains were over, and Harriet was at last feeling firm ground beneath her groping feet.

THAT FALL Mary Dutton did not return to Hartford, and Harriet, without the disturbing presence of her popular and vivacious roommate, settled quietly and cheerfully into the school routine. She was resigned to becoming an old maid, and was sure that life held no surprises for her, that it would go on like this to the end of her days.

Then, without warning, Kate was taken seriously ill. The doctors, puzzled, pronounced it general breakdown from overwork and nervous strain. They ordered complete rest and a change of scene. Harriet spent every free moment at her sister's bedside.

Beecher-like, Kate refused to admit defeat. As she lay there, her body exhausted, her mind was busily considering the welfare of the school.

"This will be a good chance to test out my plan of student government," she said. "With me away, the girls will feel a greater responsibility. Harriet, I shall depend on you to write me a full report of each week's progress." From her bed, Kate directed the reorganization of the school until she was satisfied it could go on without her.

As strength returned, and she was preparing to leave on her enforced vacation, Kate's spirits rose, and care slipped from her shoulders.

"Now I'll have time for writing. I can finish my books on Education and Moral Philosophy. I can go and select the school equipment, and perhaps try for an endowment. You know, Harriet, I'm a much better executive than a teacher. This vacation may be a blessing in disguise."

"What about my spending money?" asked Harriet.

"Oh, that! I suppose I shall have to give you a small allowance. You're old enough now, I hope, to spend it wisely."

Kate failed to consider the fact that, in all her nineteen years, Harriet had never had a penny of her own, and so could not have acquired much wisdom about handling money. With Kate away, she found it slipped through her slim fingers with astonishing rapidity.

Meanwhile, Kate flitted here and there, spent a month at Nutplains, and arrived in Boston in time for the dedication of her father's new church, now on Bowdoin Street. His obligations to the deacons thus fulfilled, Dr. Beecher

was looking for fresh fields, and was weighing two offers: one, to teach in Yale Divinity School, the other—he hardly dared mention it to his family—to head a new theological school near Cincinnati.

"I'm a little wary, though," he admitted to Kate. "Ohio is a hot-bed of Old School Calvinists. I can't think why they want me, a New School man, unless 'twas Samuel's doing. Be nice, to have Sam and John for neighbors, and Ned not so far away."

"Lyman, I tell you I could never endure a move such as that," said Mrs. Beecher for the tenth time. "With three small children . . . And you know what my health has been since James was born—"

"But wife, a warmer climate might do you good," argued Dr. Beecher. "Cincinnati lies far to the south—"

"Lyman, you're too old!" lamented Aunt Esther. "We're all too old to start life over in a howling wilderness. How would we defend ourselves from the Indians?"

"Now, Auntie," smiled Kate. "I'm sure there are no hostile Indians east of the Mississippi, and Ohio has been a state for twenty years."

"But think of the children!" implored Mrs. Beecher. "What of their education? No schools, no civilized companions—"

As the argument went on, Kate sided with her father. She, too, scented fresh fields of endeavor. "I wonder . . . They're probably in sad need of girls' schools out there."

"Of course they are!" cried her father, happy to have an ally. "And the climate would be fine for you, too, Kate."

Here we have two invalids in the family. You won't be able to teach for some time. Why not come with me on a trip out there? We can visit Sam, and find out the lay of the land."

FOR NEARLY twenty years the westward migration had been gaining momentum, but the Beechers had scarcely been aware of it. Now, as Kate and her father looked from the windows of the stagecoach on the new National Road between Philadelphia and Wheeling, they were amazed at what they saw. There was a constant flow of westbound traffic—great, creaking Conestoga wagons with their canvas tops, drawn by four or six horses; light two-horse wagons piled high with household goods, the families walking alongside; buggies, carriages and carts; riders with all their possessions in their saddlebags; and even a few plodding, barefoot pedestrians with packs on their backs.

"Is *everybody* going West?" Kate exclaimed. "Here we've been thinking of it as something quite extraordinary."

When they boarded the steamboat at Wheeling, they found the Ohio waterway also crowded with migratory families. Here it was skiffs and keelboats, cluttered with furniture and bedding, and swarming with children, chickens and live stock.

"Those folks will break up their boats to build cabins when they reach their destination," a fellow passenger informed Kate.

Dr. Beecher, on the lower deck, listened with interest to a group of men arguing about the new steam railway.

"I tell you, it's the coming thing!" one shouted. "In a few years it'll have the stagecoach backed right off the map—for mail, freight, passengers, and everything. Steamcars are economical, they're fast—"

"That's it. They're too fast," cried another. "Who wants to go hurtling through space at fifteen miles an hour?"

"Fifteen? Why, man, the new special locomotive tested on the Charleston track made *thirty* miles! That's downright wicked!"

"As if steam *boats* wa'n't dangerous enough—allus blowin' up," complained an old man, "without talkin' of steam *cars*! No, sir-ee! Not for me! I ain't in that big a hurry to git to heaven, nor no place else!"

The journey took nearly three weeks, and it was April when the Beechers reached Cincinnati. The fickle weather of the Ohio Valley was, for once, on good behavior. From the terrace of Samuel Foote's home, high on one of the city's many hills, they had a splendid view.

They could scarcely see the muddy streets, or the ugly shacks and warehouses along the river's edge far below. Beyond these flowed the broad, placid waters of the Ohio, and the steep hills of the Kentucky shore rose majestically to meet the sky. It was a lush, green world they looked on—the green of new grass and budding trees—and even the muddy river looked green. The slopes were dotted with the vivid pink of redbud and peach blossoms, and the white of dogwood.

"It's lovely now," said Samuel, "but you should see it in October! The East has nothing to compare. Over there lies

Kentucky—'ole Kaintuck,' as the natives say. The Indians called it 'dark and bloody ground.' But to me it's the land of the future. This area will some day be the heart of America."

Kate wrote enthusiastic letters to Harriet, describing the spot as an Elysium and a Paradise. To Dr. Beecher, it seemed like the Promised Land, as he listened to John Foote singing the praises of Cincinnati.

"This town's been booming," said John, "ever since the Miami Canal was opened, giving us two waterways, besides the overland route. We are the hub of western commerce and progressive in education, too. We have a *free* public High School, and a city college. And if it's climate you're thinking of, why, they say folks will have to move away from here if they ever want to die!"

Cincinnati's civic boosters were eager for Lyman Beecher to join them. A famous Eastern pastor would be a drawing card. But the Old School churchmen had nearly blocked his appointment to Lane Theological Seminary, and Dr. Beecher foresaw a good, stiff fight, but one not to his liking. He wanted to fight the infidels and wrestle with sin—not with rival factions in his own camp. Moving out here would be risky, would mean dividing his family, and uprooting a New England growth of ten generations. But yet, the West must be saved! He prayed earnestly for guidance.

Then suddenly the finger of Providence seemed to point the way. Besides the Lane presidency, Dr. Beecher was offered a pastorate by the Second Presbyterian Church. This was what he had dreamed of all his life—to head both

church and school in a new and better land, and to lead his people to new heights of power, prosperity and Godliness. Cost what it might, he would accept this great task which the Lord had laid upon him.

BACK in Hartford, Harriet was stunned by the news, and by Kate's decision to give up her school, and start new projects in the West. It would be fine to visit Uncle Samuel, but to go out there to live was unthinkable! She loved the very soil of her New England, and the roots of her being cried out in protest. Yet, if the family all went, she would have no choice.

She was amazed at Kate's willingness to give up the school which they had all worked so hard to establish, of which they had been so proud. But Kate was turning it over to Professor Brace, their former teacher at the Academy in Litchfield. She had greater plans now.

"I shall never be strong enough to teach and work as I did here," she told Harriet, "but I am a good organizer. With you to help me, I have great hopes of developing Female Education in the West."

As in Litchfield days, the Beecher clan rallied to their father's call. George declared he would leave Yale and join the expedition. He wanted to be the first student enrolled at Lane Seminary. Will, now a licensed minister, would follow as soon as a post could be found for him. Charles and Henry, much to their disappointment, were to be left behind—Henry at Amherst, Charles at Bowdoin. But they

vowed they'd come West later. Edward had already blazed the trail into the Illinois wilderness. Only Mary, happily settled in Hartford, was deaf to the call of the West.

An epoch in the lives of the Beechers had ended. They were about to fare forth on a perilous mission—a crusade, which would leave its mark on the destinies of America in ways that were strange and unforeseen.

X I I I

ONCE Harriet had resigned herself to leaving New England, and the last tearful goodbyes had been said, her spirits rose rapidly. She adored travelling, and her letters bubbled with excitement. She and Kate had promised to keep the stay-at-home relatives informed of their progress, but since Kate was busy composing a long poem, *The Emigrant's Farewell*, it was Harriet who became corresponding secretary and clerk of the expedition. From New York she wrote to sister Mary Perkins in Hartford:

The great crusade for conquering the West has begun well. The newspapers are making much of our exodus. One reporter has likened it to the migration of Jacob and his sons. But if we must use a Biblical analogy, I prefer that of Noah. Of course we travel by land, and are taking no animals, but our party does seem to fall into pairs. Mama and Aunt Esther, equally gloomy about the future, and distressed by the present lack of clean caps; Father and George, full of hope and high spirits; Kate and I, eternally

scribbling; our two little mischiefs, Tom and Jamie; and sister Bella, in a class by herself.

Wherever we stop, we are besieged with invitations, and our party splits up and goes to various hospitable homes. I never realized how many admirers Father has. He preaches or lectures nearly every night. Tonight he is to perform in the Chatham Theatre. Imagine Father setting foot on a stage, even to deliver *A Plea for the West*. Aren't we becoming worldly, though?

Lyman Beecher's dyspeptic doldrums had vanished in the thrill of this new enterprise, and he was again the gay, zestful Papa of the old Litchfield days.

"I bagged another two thousand today," he announced gleefully to his women-folk. "I'm a better beggar than I thought I'd be. If I keep this up, I'll have enough to hire a second professor for certain."

"It's a fine how-de-do," sniffed Aunt Esther, "when the President of a college has to go out and raise the money before he can have a staff of teachers."

"Lane is a new school," argued Lyman. "Its founder, Mr. Tappan, has been most generous, and his friends are working hard, but more contributions will be needed. I'm glad to help."

"Who will this second professor be?" asked Harriet.

"I hope to persuade Calvin Stowe to take the position. He'll want a fair salary, though, for he's to be married."

"Oh!" murmured Harriet, blankly.

"Yes, indeed," her father rambled on. "He's engaged to the daughter of the President of Dartmouth—a fine match, I understand. He'd be just the man to teach Biblical Lit-

erature, but I fear he won't want to leave the East now."

"Not if he's wise," snapped Aunt Esther. "What a come-down for his poor young bride!"

"A young woman might be better able to endure it than you or I," observed Mrs. Beecher plaintively.

All at once Harriet felt unaccountably depressed. Was it the unexpected news of Calvin Stowe's engagement, or was it just the cold, rainy weather?

It rained all the way into Philadelphia, and the Beechers arrived weary and bedraggled, and destitute of clean clothing. But Harriet took Tommy and Bella to gaze reverently at Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, and told them what was meant by "The Cradle of Liberty," and why liberty was the greatest thing in the world.

After a farewell look at the Atlantic from the foot of Arch Street, the travellers set their faces westward. It was October, 1832. They had chartered a stagecoach, and the nine of them, including three restless children, filled it to overflowing. The rain had stopped, and the bright October weather was stimulating. As they bowled along through Pennsylvania over the much-travelled National Road, they were a merry party. They told stories and sang hymns, while Lyman drew out his old fiddle, so long untouched, and sawed gaily through his repertoire.

The earnest George, ever mindful of chances for missionary work, had brought along a quantity of religious tracts and pamphlets. With these he and the small boys pelted all passersby, and littered the streets of villages they passed through—"peppering the land with moral influence," as

Harriet remarked. People stared after the Beecher coach in wonder.

The party rested at Harrisburg, while Dr. Beecher filled the local pulpits, and hired two carriages to take them through the mountains. The scenery was fine, and they had ample time to admire it, for it took them eight days to cover the distance made by the mail-stage in two.

"Take heart, ladies," said Dr. Beecher. "Once we get to Wheeling, and on the steamboat, our troubles will be over."

He was very wrong. At Wheeling they were greeted by terrifying news. An epidemic of Asiatic cholera was raging in Cincinnati, and every up-bound boat was jammed with passengers fleeing from the plague-ridden city, eager to describe the horrors they had left behind. The news threw the older ladies into a panic. Aunt Esther had been steeling herself to cope with Indians and bandits, but never with anything like this!

"So that's your wonderful healthy climate!" she wailed.

Mrs. Beecher began planning the details of her funeral. "I want to be buried in Portland, with my people," she stated dolefully.

Lyman strove manfully to calm the ladies. They would wait in Wheeling until the epidemic had subsided.

"Cholera always dies out after the first heavy frost," he assured them, wisely. But they could not help thinking of next summer, and the next.

During the two weeks the travellers remained in Wheeling, Dr. Beecher improved his time by holding a series of

evangelistic meetings. But Aunt Esther concerned herself with more material things, and learned a great deal about the trials and dangers of river travel. When the time of departure drew near, she flatly refused to go aboard a steamboat.

"Even if the boiler doesn't explode," she contended, "the pilots are drunk half the time, and liable to run us on a snag or a sandbar. The cabins are crowded and filthy, and all boats now must be contaminated with cholera."

Mrs. Beecher agreed with her, so it was decided to continue the journey by land. There was little gayety now, and the singing had a funereal quality. They were wondering if Uncles Samuel and John Foote had survived the epidemic.

Progress over Ohio's corduroy roads—made of small logs laid side by side—was slow and often painful. The jolting fairly shook the words out of their mouths, so there was little conversation. It was mid-November when they reached their journey's end—seven long weeks since the emigrants had said farewell to New England, and gone forth to do the Lord's bidding.

Lyman Beecher could scarcely have chosen a worse time to introduce his family to their new home. November skies were gray over the Ohio Valley, the air damp and chill. The trees were naked, the fields drab. The sluggish, shrunken river mirrored a dreary, gray world.

Cincinnati, too, was changed. The streets were nearly deserted, and an air of mourning prevailed. The houses were grimy and blackened from the pall of thick, soft-coal smoke which had been made to envelop the city during the

plague, in the belief that it might check the spread of contagion. All in all, it was a desolate place.

"We won't be living in the city proper," said Lyman apologetically. "They're building us a nice house in Walnut Hills, near Lane Seminary. It's two miles out, in a beautiful location."

"Just wait till you see it in the spring," added Kate.

"Hm-m! If we live that long!" was Aunt Esther's grim rejoinder.

They drove straight to the home of Samuel Foote, and to their joy and relief, Samuel himself came to the door. With all his old-time heartiness, he ushered in the weary travellers to be warmed and washed and fed, and revel in the luxury of his fine, spacious house.

The Footes had all escaped the cholera, and believed it was over for good. Uncle John came after dinner, and they fell to discussing Cincinnati, and its new fields for Beecher talents.

Uncle John was full of facts and figures. The city had had, before the epidemic, thirty thousand inhabitants, plus a thousand free Negroes. "As for business," he said proudly, "we're way ahead of Boston in manufacturing—make everything here from boats to buttons. So many slaughterhouses they've nicknamed the town 'Porkopolis.' And our breweries are immense. The beer is the finest—"

"Let me tell the girls about the schools," put in Uncle Samuel hastily, for Mrs. Beecher had stiffened at the mention of breweries, and Aunt Esther was looking down her nose. "We have a free public school for poor boys. Wood-

ward, it's called, and William McGuffey teaches there. You'll want to meet him, Kate. He writes textbooks, too. And we have a charter for a new college—the only city college in America.”

“And don't forget the Mechanic's Institute,” cried Uncle John. “I helped endow that. Besides giving free technical training, it's a sort of recreation center, with lectures every Saturday night. Lyman, won't you speak there next week?”

“Be glad to, John, if you'll give me time to prepare something appropriate for young working men.”

“Oh, everybody goes to the lectures,” said Samuel. “This town is lecture-mad. They support three lecture courses. We'll advertise you, and the place won't hold 'em all.”

“We also have two tremendous theatres,” said John. “All the fine actors from the East. Edwin Forrest will play—”

“I doubt if that will interest the Beechers,” interrupted Samuel. “But they'll be pleased to know that this is a publishing center. Girls, would you believe it? We have three book publishers, four magazines, and eight newspapers—some weekly, of course. Here, Kate. Look over the *Chronicle*. Hattie, here's the latest *Gazette*.”

Harriet scanned the paper with interest. It carried few pictures, but her eye was at once caught by a woodcut of a fleeing Negro with a pack on his back, and underneath was an offer of a reward for his capture, “dead or alive.” The face of the runaway slave reminded her of Holly. She sighed and turned the page. There it was again! That same picture, but the advertisement was that of another slave-owner in Kentucky.

It dawned on Harriet that instead of being in quiet, remote New England, she was now on the border—that mythical Mason-Dixon line. Slavery was no longer something to weave theories about; it was a reality, right under her eyes, in all its uglier aspects. There could be no escape, no forgetting it, now. She was filled with a sudden dislike for Cincinnati, which must be full of fugitive slaves and their pursuers!

THE NEW brick house was nowhere near completion, so the Beechers had to make the best of a temporary home that Uncle Samuel had found for them near the church. The house proved to be a monstrosity, inconvenient and ill-arranged. The back parlor had but one window, and the kitchen could not be reached except by going outdoors. Mrs. Beecher said little, but her look of long-suffering martyrdom spoke volumes. Harriet, however, laughed at the inconveniences, and her father ignored them.

The church was near enough, but Lane Seminary lay two miles out a muddy, stony road, and Dr. Beecher had to buy a horse and carryall at once. Invitations poured in on him, to lecture, sit on boards, or attend welcoming receptions and council meetings. He was hardly home a minute.

George and the women worked furiously, unpacking the furniture which had come ahead by wagon-train, and trying to make the odd place livable. The children were sent outdoors to play, but they needed watching, for Tom and Jamie liked to make friends with the pigs that frequently

roamed the streets. At last they were settled, after a fashion, and the girls sat down to look about them.

"I'm too exhausted to think about starting a school now," sighed Kate. "You won't need any spending money this winter, Harriet, so why don't we devote the time to writing?"

"Writing what?" asked Harriet, without enthusiasm.

"Well, I've been thinking of a geography for children—different from the usual textbook of dry facts and figures. I'll write enough to give you the idea, and then you can help me. We can likely get a publisher here in the city, and we'll divide the proceeds."

"All right," said Harriet. "I'll write an opening chapter, and see if you like it."

"Good!" exclaimed Kate. "We'll each write a chapter, then try them out on Bella, to see which she likes better."

The idea grew on Harriet. She decided it should be a sort of storybook—one that would teach facts, too, in a way easy for a child to remember. She and Kate set to work at once.

When the two versions were read to ten-year-old Bella, there was no doubt about her response—she liked Hattie's better. Kate resigned very cheerfully, since she had never intended to write the book herself. She lacked the patience, and had bigger things in mind. But she felt it was good for Hattie to have something to do, to keep from being homesick.

"Write it any way you like, Harriet, just so you don't forget to be instructive. The book must have my name on it, though, else it will never sell."

"Of course," Harriet agreed. "Nobody ever heard of me. I'd be scared to meet publishers, or sign my name to anything. But I'll have fun writing it."

She set about eagerly. As she wrote, all the old nostalgia for Litchfield returned—memories of the child Hattie, reading avidly the forbidden *Arabian Nights*, listening entranced to Uncle Samuel's tales of far-off lands, and the customs of the children of China. How she would have loved a storybook geography then! She must talk with Uncle again about some of those fascinating things.

As the story grew, little Bella hung over her chair, begging to hear each chapter as it was finished. Even Tom and Jamie deserted the pigs to listen. Harriet forgot the gloomy, ill-heated house, the noise around her, the gray skies and sodden earth outside her window. She even forgot to long for New England and Georgiana May. With a pen in her hand, she was happy.

X I V

WINTER in the Ohio Valley, with its incessant rains, sleet, and brief snows, its freezes and thaws, passed quickly. By late February the grass was green, and the daffodils were poking through the dark earth. Harriet laid aside her pen with a sigh. The geography was finished.

"You do have a knack of writing for children," Kate admitted. "No reason why you couldn't earn your living that way."

She sold the little book to the local firm of Corey and Fairbanks—an outright sale, with no royalties. Harriet's share was one hundred and eighty-seven dollars, which seemed a dazzling fortune.

"It will be thrilling to see my name on the cover of a book," she said delightedly.

"Just your initial, dear," replied Kate. "It will read, 'By C. & H. Beecher.'"

But when the publishers' first announcement appeared, poor Harriet looked in vain for even her initial. The book was attributed to "Catherine E. Beecher."

"I don't know why they made that mistake," said Kate. "Of course, my reputation as an educator—oh, well, I'll correct it later." But the matter slipped Kate's mind. She was very busy promoting a new school, to be called The Western Female Institute, Inc.

"Now this school, I shall merely supervise," she told Harriet. "You and another girl or two will carry on the teaching. I'm writing to Mary Dutton, to persuade her to be Principal. She's frivolous, but in spite of that, she's a fine teacher."

"Give Mary my love," said Harriet, "and tell her I need stirring up. She can do it better than anyone."

She could. One April afternoon, the charming Mary Dutton tripped down the gangplank of the *River Queen*, and flung herself into Harriet's arms.

"Here I am, darling," she cried, "to help enlighten the Western Females. Isn't it just too wonderful? Tell me every single thing!"

"Let's wait for a quieter spot!" shouted Harriet over the uproar of the dock. "We've a cab waiting. George will see to your baggage."

George left the girls at Mary's boarding-house, where they chattered for hours, bridging the three-year gap in their friendship.

"I was sure you'd be married long before this," said Harriet. "Wasn't there someone in New Haven . . . you wrote me—"

"Oh, yes, that one. Nothing came of it. There were others, too, but Harriet, I've decided it isn't as easy to get married as most people think."

"It isn't for me, but you've had so many admirers!"

"Admirers, maybe, but not good matrimonial prospects. The men who like me are too young, or too old, or too poor, or they drink too much; and the ones I really want are already married, or, if they're not, they go off and propose to somebody else."

"At least you can say you've had a lot of fun," Harriet said wistfully.

"Oh, I haven't given up hope yet. Is there much good husband material around here?"

"I haven't seen any," admitted Harriet.

"There must be. I've always heard the West was full of nice men just clamoring for wives. That's the main reason I came. Maybe you haven't looked in the right places."

"I'm afraid I haven't looked at all," smiled Harriet. "I've been cooped up in the house all winter, writing a book." She told Mary all about the geography.

"Why let Kate take the credit?" Mary asked indignantly. "How can a writer get a name, if she doesn't sign it? You're too modest, Harriet. How do you expect to get anywhere?"

"I don't," said Harriet cheerfully. "I expect to be an old-maid schoolteacher, and Miss Beecher's sister, all my days."

In spite of the casual tone, Mary caught a note of bitterness in her friend's voice.

"Darling, I'll tell you what you need! A new bonnet!"

"Why, this straw is only two years old, and has fresh ribbons."

"What of it?" argued Mary. "There's a newer shape out now, called the Coal-scuttle. It's very fetching. There's nothing like a new bonnet to bolster up a girl's spirits, especially in spring."

"Aunt Esther gives me sulphur and molasses in my tea, and that's much cheaper."

"Expense be hanged! Didn't you just tell me you were paid for your book? You owe it to yourself, darling, after all you've been through. Let's go shopping tomorrow. I'm dying to see what the stores are like."

Harriet needed no more persuasion. She hadn't seen the stores, either. The girls spent the day exploring, and Mary, though surprised at the grandeur of the displays, didn't think much of the styles.

"They're two years behind the times," she complained. "Skirts are much fuller now, and sleeves have the puff nearly down to the elbow. A long, sloping shoulder line is the smart thing, and waists must be very tiny. You need the new laced corset to get the right effect."

"Oh, dear," sighed Harriet. "Why couldn't they have left us our comfortable old Empire dresses?"

She yielded to temptation, and bought not only a Coal-scuttle bonnet, but a pair of little black slippers, laced about the ankle with ribbons. Mary was right. It did give her spirits a lift, and she was very gay as they walked home through the gathering dusk.

"We must hurry," said Harriet. "There's a very rough element in the city, and ladies don't venture out alone after dark."

"You mean, the Negroes?" asked Mary nervously.

"No, white men—dock hands, slaughterhouse workers, and idlers. Uncle Samuel says Cincinnati has both the highest and the lowest type of citizen—"

There was a sudden disturbance in the next street—men shouting and running, and shots fired. The girls clutched each other in alarm, and quickened their pace. As they neared the corner, they saw three white men half-carrying a young Negro. His hands were bound behind him, and he limped painfully, leaving a trail of blood on the ground. For an instant the street-lamp glistened on the dark face, distorted with fear, pain and abject misery. Only an instant, but that face was etched forever on Harriet's brain. With a shudder, she sidestepped the pool of blood by the lamp post, and began walking so fast Mary could hardly keep up.

"Harriet, what was it? Who were those men?" she panted.

Harriet's voice was strained. "A runaway slave—being dragged back—to bondage!"

"I don't understand. Isn't this a free state?"

"Yes, but only free Negroes are allowed to enter it. And Kentucky, just across the river, is a slave state, and this is a hunting ground for professional slave-catchers. Sometimes they even seize free Negroes, pretending they are slaves."

"Why, that's outrageous!" exclaimed Mary. "Can't it be stopped?"

"Nobody seems to try," replied Harriet grimly.

All the gayety of the shopping trip was gone. Soberly she put away her new finery. Who could take pleasure in such vanities, while there was so much wrong and misery in the world?

LILAC-TIME, and the spring days for which she had been longing, found Harriet and Mary immersed in schoolroom drudgery. There was no thrill to this opening of the Institute, as there had been with Hartford Seminary. Writing to Georgiana, Harriet declared her time was taken up with such weighty matters as "quills and paper on the floor, recess bells, giving leave to speak, and drinking in the entry (cold water, mind you!)."

With the intense heat of early summer, cholera reappeared. Although it was soon stamped out by strenuous health measures, the Beechers saw what it could do, for two students died at Lane Seminary. Even carefree Mary Dutton eagerly seized a chance to go away during August vacation.

"Harriet, guess what!" she bubbled. "I've an invitation to

visit our little pupil, Lucy Wyatt, down in Kentucky, for a week or two. And furthermore, *you're* going along!"

"But Mary," protested Harriet, "Lucy hasn't invited me."

"I won't go a step without you. I wrote Mrs. Wyatt you were coming, and she said, the more the merrier. You know the Southern hospitality. Who knows but we'll meet some nice men."

"All right," smiled Harriet, "I'll go, just for the trip. But I'll leave the social side to you. What clothes should we take?"

"Plenty of thin dresses. In this awful, sticky heat, they just won't stay fresh."

"I think I'll buy muslin, and make me a dress," mused Harriet.

"Oh, do, and I'll help fit it. Get plenty of material, for the skirt must have a wide flounce. And do get some new petticoats—very full, with lots of ruffles."

Keeping up with Mary was always expensive, and Harriet's geography money dwindled fast. She had no stated salary for teaching, but Kate had given her leave to dip into the school funds for what she needed.

On an August morning, the girls boarded the boat for Maysville, sixty miles down the river. Harriet was thrilled, for it was her first ride on a steamboat.

The deck was crowded with groups of men, spitting tobacco juice and talking politics. Many cast approving glances at the two trim little figures, but giving back only stony stares, the girls picked their way daintily to a vacant bench at the stern. There they could watch the churning

paddle-wheel, with its wake of foam, and catch the cooling spray in their faces.

The Ohio was not merely a river, it was a thoroughfare, the main artery of trade between the upper valley and the Deep South. Barges, flatboats and skiffs dotted its surface. House-boats and store-boats were tied up at every wharf. Fine homes turned their backs on the villages, and faced the river, with long terraced lawns sloping down to private landings. At every stop, the mellow, husky note of the boat whistle brought bustling crowds down to watch the boat come in.

The banks, with their trailing willows and white-trunked sycamores, slid by with dreamy quietude, and the rhythmic splashing of the wheel lulled Harriet's restless mind into welcome, thoughtful repose. She would have liked to go on and on, clear to the Gulf.

All too soon the boat trip ended, and the girls took a stage for the remaining twelve miles to Washington, Kentucky—so-called because it was the terminus of the post-road from the nation's capital.

So this was the South! Harriet had been vaguely uneasy about this sojourn into slave territory, the Indians' "Dark and Bloody Ground."

Would she see harrowing sights—Negroes being shot or flogged, or toiling under the lash in fields of cotton or cane? But as she rode on toward the heart of the Bluegrass, she realized that here Tobacco, not Cotton, was King. There were slaves, working slowly between the rows of giant leaves, but they were singing unfamiliar airs that sounded

like hymns, and it was hard to decide whether the music was happy or sad. It was unlike any she had ever heard.

The Wyatts' house was small, but their cordiality was boundless. That evening the girls had their first taste of Southern cookery—a bewildering array of new and delicious foods, including cornbread and beaten biscuit. The meal was prepared and served by the Wyatts' one servant, an old Negress they called Aunt Charity.

"I gave her her freedom years ago," explained Mr. Wyatt, "because I don't believe in slavery, but she wouldn't leave."

Harriet's face showed her surprise, and he went on, "Why should she? She's like one of the family. We supply all her simple wants, and we'll take care of her when she grows too old to work."

"Has she any children?" asked Harriet.

"She did have, but they've all been sold and scattered years ago. Charity thinks of us as her folks. I believe most well-treated house servants feel the same way. The run-aways are usually fieldhands."

Lucy Wyatt was only fifteen, but her older sister, Delia, knew all the best families for miles around. Everyone had made plans for giving the little Yankee schoolma'ams a good time. There were hay-rides, picnics and parties galore. Harriet learned to play singing games, and to romp gaily through the figures of the Virginia Reel. She loved that, but when the dancing stopped, she felt herself outclassed by the vivacious Southern girls.

This round of gayety was climaxed by a weekend visit to Brentwood, a large plantation several miles distant.

An avenue of stately locust trees led to the great manor house, with its long, white-columned portico, in the best southern-Georgian tradition. The girls gasped in admiration of the wide hallway, extending clear through the house, and opening onto a bricked terrace and flower garden in the rear. An intricate spiral staircase wound its way right up to the roof, three stories above. The dark red floors glistened, the high, spacious rooms were filled with the dull gleam of rosewood and mahogany furniture, rich, brocaded hangings, and the bright gleam of mirrors and brasses, silver candelabra and crystal prism-glass.

"Such elegance!" breathed Mary into her friend's ear. "To think I imagined the West as a howling wilderness of log huts and pine-slab furniture!"

The guests were taken to inspect the stables, with the Colonel's fine thoroughbreds (pure Kentucky stock, he said proudly), and then to the slave quarters. Each neat, white-washed cabin had its own vegetable patch, and in the gravelled area in front, puppies, kittens and cunning pickaninnies tumbled about in play.

The girls saw the great storehouses of supplies for the whole plantation—clothing, staple foods, and medicines, house furnishings and tools.

"I figure it costs me around fifty dollars a year to feed and clothe each grown Negro," explained the owner. "None of them goes ragged at Brentwood."

Harriet doubted that the Beecher children had ever cost their father that much.

In the cool of the evening, the party sat in the garden,

fragrant with honeysuckle. Banjoes twanged in the slave quarters, and Colonel Brent, proud of his musical Negroes, sent for them to come up and entertain his guests. A half-dozen young men, trailed by a group of pickaninnies, approached, with broad grins and much rolling of eyes, and asked what they would like.

"Something lively, boys, and then give us a little hoe-down, Slim."

No Negro had ever appeared on the stage then, and black-face minstrel shows were only beginning. But Southerners had long been aware of the Negroes' special talent for song and dance. The rollicking music of the Brentwood slaves was an entrancing novelty to the two girls, as was the shuffle dance performed in the gravel path by the agile Slim. The pickaninnies imitated him in ludicrous style, and Mary was convulsed at their antics. She threw them all the pennies in her purse. Even Harriet smiled.

"If slavery were always like this," she was thinking. "These Negroes are better off than many white people. The system is as good or as bad as the people who run it, but can it ever be right? Am I growing confused?"

On Sunday they looked in on the Negro prayer meeting. The slaves met in an empty tobacco shed, open on two sides, and lighted by lanterns. The Colonel's party seated themselves on a low wall close by. They were unable to hear the words of the worshippers, but the Brents said the singing was the main thing.

"Do they use hymn books?" asked Harriet, adding, "but then I suppose they can't read."

"A good many can," said the Colonel's lady. "I teach the young ones myself. That has always been one duty of the Brent women. But their songs don't come in books. They're handed down, from one generation to another. They keep improvising new melodies, or new words. It's amazing."

The Negroes, who had been kneeling, now rose and began to sing. Their voices had a quality of indescribable richness, a joyous exultation. The singers closed their eyes, and began to sway as one, their feet beating out a muffled rhythm on the earthen floor. Then a leader stepped forward, and in a deep, mellow voice, began, "When Israel was in Egypt's land . . ." The chorus chanted, the voices swelled in the anguished cry of an unhappy race:

*Go down, Moses! Way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh, let my people go.*

Suddenly Harriet was a child again, in the attic room at Litchfield. Holly's voice was in her ears: "The good Lord ain't goin' to forget my people . . . I'm trustin' in His promise." A wave of nostalgia swept over her—a longing for New England, and the days forever gone. She felt again her childish horror of slavery. The recurrent chant, "Let my people go," beat unbearably in her ears. It was melancholy, but increasing in urgency and power, with an ominous undercurrent. She gave a nervous start when Colonel Brent touched her arm. He was smiling down at her with proud complacency.

"How do you like that, Miss Harriet? Those Negroes of mine certainly can sing!"

"MY, but I've had a wonderful time," sighed Mary on the return trip to Ohio. "Those Southern boys are sweet, but they don't mean a word they say. Didn't you enjoy yourself, Harriet?"

"Of course I did."

"You didn't act like it. All the time at Brentwood you went around in a daze."

"Did I?" said Harriet. "I'm sorry if I seemed rude. I was—just thinking!"

XV

IN SPITE OF Aunt Esther's gloomy predictions, the Beecher fortunes were looking up that fall. The girls' school was doing well, and their geography had sold out three editions. Kate was sorry now she hadn't got a royalty contract, but who would have dreamed such a book could become a best seller? George had passed his examinations for the ministry, and was preaching at nearby Batavia. And best of all, the new house in Walnut Hills was finished. It was large and commodious, and stood near a grove of giant oaks and beeches, where trickled a little brook that reminded Harriet of New England.

Now Lyman Beecher could live like a country squire. From his study door he could shoot the passenger pigeons that settled to feed on the beechnuts. With two salaries, he could afford a groom for the new horse, a gardener, and two hired women inside—for Aunt Esther's rheumatism was

bad in the damp climate, and Mrs. Beecher had become a semi-invalid.

Lane, it was true, made slow progress, but he was hopeful, and happy now to have his right-hand man of Boston days, Calvin Stowe, with him in the new enterprise. For Calvin had come, and brought with him his bride, Eliza.

Harriet found a new and valued friend in Eliza Tyler Stowe. She was near Harriet's age, and almost as small. Eliza was also timid and retiring, and overwhelmed by the details of setting up a new home in a strange place. Harriet at once took Eliza under her wing, and they became fast friends. She often accompanied the Stowes on the Professor's many lecture engagements, at Eliza's request.

"Poor dear Calvin is so absent-minded," she confided, "he's likely to forget me, and go off with some gentleman after the lecture."

Except for occasional lapses, however, Calvin's devotion to his bride was quite touching, Harriet thought. Although his oratory did not compare with her father's, he was a pleasant speaker, sprinkling even the dullest subjects with droll Yankee humor, and anecdotes told in dialect of quaint village characters he had known.

Before long this congenial trio was joined by Kate on Monday evenings to attend the meetings of the Semi-Colon Club. This was an exclusive literary club which Samuel Foote had helped organize. He came in person to deliver the invitation to join.

"Are you sure they want me?" asked Harriet. "I haven't written much, compared with Kate."

"Of course they do," replied Samuel heartily. "Your geography puts you in the professional class, and many of us are amateurs. But there's Caroline Lee Hentz, the novelist, and Judge Hall, editor of the *Western Literary Monthly*—"

"Oh, dear, I should be frightened to death of them," cried Harriet. "Would I have to read my own things aloud?"

"Oh, no. We elect a reader for the evening, and you needn't sign your name, unless you want to. The contributions are mostly short essays and sketches. They're read and criticised—not too harshly—then we have refreshments, and end up with a Virginia Reel. We don't take it too seriously, you see, and we have a lot of fun. They meet at my house, usually. So you and Kate come, and bring your friends, the Stowes."

Harriet soon learned to look forward to these Monday evenings. The Semi-Colons were a genial group, though oddly assorted, including such persons as Salmon Chase, the city's rising young lawyer, Ormsby Mitchel, whose hobby was astronomy, and Dr. Drake, who gave Ohio its nickname, "The Buckeye State." During the social hour, the men grouped together in the library to discuss politics and civic enterprises, while the ladies, usually dominated by Kate, talked books and education, as well as recipes. Harriet stayed by the side of the timid Eliza Stowe, sipping Uncle Samuel's rare Madeira wine, until time for the Virginia Reel.

Harriet tried to think of an idea for her first literary con-

tribution—to be unsigned, of course. It must be light and clever—something the listeners would enjoy. Inspired by the popularity of Calvin Stowe's New England stories, she recalled a similar tale of Dr. Beecher's about his foster-father, Uncle Lot Benton. This would surely appeal to at least one of the company—Calvin Stowe.

The sketch was short, but she wrote it very carefully, painting a vivid pen-picture of the shrewd, crusty old Yankee farmer, so often quoted by her father. Then she sneaked her unsigned manuscript onto the reader's table, and waited anxiously.

When "Uncle Lot" came up for reading, Harriet grew hot and cold, and sat rigid in her lyre-backed chair, her hands tightly clasped in the folds of her skirt. Out of the corner of her eye, she watched the faces about her, especially Calvin Stowe's. When the smiles of the listeners gave way to chuckles, she relaxed a little, and tried to smile, too. The sketch was a success!

An hour later, Kate approached her with a cryptic smile, saying, "Harriet, Judge Hall wants to speak to you."

Shy and bewildered, Harriet joined the editor, who had never addressed a word to her before.

"Miss Harriet," he began abruptly, "have you noticed my announcement in *Western Monthly*, of the story contest?" She nodded. "Are you thinking of entering?"

"Oh, no, sir. I haven't anything—worthy."

"I liked your New England character sketch tonight, very much."

"Oh, then . . . you know I . . . ?" gasped Harriet.

"Your sister told me. Fact is, I'd advise you to expand it into a story, and enter it in the contest. It's a new kind of realism, and might prove very popular. You should do more in that same vein."

Harriet walked home on air that night, but viewing the matter in the light of cold reason next day, she felt sure Judge Hall was only trying to be kind. Surely she had no chance for the prize. But since she had promised, she expanded the sketch and sent it in.

Soon she had forgotten it in the excitement of a surprise visit from Ned, who had come to address the convention of Western teachers held annually at Cincinnati. The family had not seen him since he left Boston, four years before, to take over the college at Jacksonville, Illinois. The talk around the Beecher fireside was fast and furious.

Everyone in America just then was discussing the new Abolition movement, led by William L. Garrison of Boston, who was publishing a paper called *The Liberator*. Most people were shocked by it, and a Boston mob had wrecked the printing press and dragged Garrison through the streets.

"Imagine that, in Boston!" exclaimed Ned. "And we used to think the West was wild."

"Mob violence is deplorable anywhere," said Dr. Beecher. "But Garrison brought it on himself with his violent language. He's one of these he-goat men, who thinks he can butt aside everything in his path."

"I can't help admiring the man," returned Ned. "It takes extreme measures to get people stirred up to doing something about slavery."

"But it's stirring them up the wrong way," objected Kate. "The Negroes got stirred up, and what happened? Nat Turner's rebellion, and sixty white people massacred. You can't blame the South for hating Garrison."

"He's doing more harm than good," agreed Dr. Beecher. "Don't forget the anti-slavery movement started in the South, but now Southerners are turning away from it. No, gradual emancipation is the only way, and it's bound to be slow. The Abolitionists are like the man who wants to burn down the house to get rid of the rats!"

"I'm beginning to see why Colonization hasn't worked—" began Harriet, but no one heard her.

"Father, don't you believe in free speech, and a free press?" Ned shouted. "We have an anti-slavery paper in Illinois, run by a man named Lovejoy. He's a friend of mine, and I contribute to it."

"Ned, I hope you won't get mixed up with the radical element," warned his father. "Remember Garrison wanted me to go in with him before I left Boston, and I wouldn't have anything to do with it. Told him plainly what I thought of it, and I guess he's never forgiven me."

"Well, our paper is nothing like Garrison's, but we may have trouble before long getting it into the mails. Since Andrew Jackson put a ban on 'incendiary' literature—"

"Who's to decide what's 'incendiary' and what isn't?" cried Kate. "This isn't a free country any more!"

Ned and Kate agreed on one thing—that the public schools were very bad, and something ought to be done about them.

"The worst trouble is the teachers in these district schools," declared Ned. "Their motto is, 'No lickin', no larnin',' and no intelligent man stays long a schoolmaster."

"The *real* trouble," countered Kate, "is that the teachers are all men. If women were permitted in the public schools, you'd see a big improvement."

Ned thought this impractical. No woman could handle the big, rowdy boys, the irate patrons, the janitor work. But Kate stuck by her guns.

"Women have more tact and patience than men," she argued. "They can do a much better job of giving young children a good start; but of course they would need special training."

The talk went on for hours, and between them, Ned and Kate planned a system of Teacher-Training Colleges which were to revolutionize western education, and open up a whole new field for women. Kate resolved to tour the country promoting this project, and collecting an education fund.

IN FEBRUARY Harriet received a letter from *Western Monthly*. She opened it, all of a flutter, and out dropped a check for fifty dollars. She had actually won the story prize! And with her first real literary work.

Thus encouraged, she began another character study, to be called "Aunt Mary," but really about her mother Roxana. This was a serious piece of writing, and the results did not satisfy her. She could not express her deep feel-

ing for her mother, bound up so closely with all her childhood memories; and when she tried to analyze Roxana as a person, Harriet found she had never understood her. Her mother was really two people, she thought. Roxana Foote, brilliant, gay, and talented, had been changed by marriage into Mrs. Beecher, the wise, capable, devoted wife and mother, with no thought except for her family. Harriet wondered, if *she* should marry, would it change her so completely? Would she give up her dreams of fame and fortune, and live contented only in her children? Or had Roxana been content? Her face had always seemed sad. Now Harriet would never know what had been in her mother's heart.

THAT JUNE Harriet would be twenty-three, and Mary Dutton, two years older, exclaimed ruefully, "We're getting on, darling. Let's go back East for our vacation and see Niagara Falls together. If we wait for a wedding trip, we may never see them."

"I'd love to," sighed Harriet, "but it would be terribly expensive, and the family wouldn't see any reason for it."

"You have a drawing account on the school funds. Why not get some good of it? And surely you can think up some good reason."

"Why, of course! Henry Ward is graduating from Amherst this June, and none of the Beechers will be there. I'll go to his Commencement!"

The family approved of this plan. "You can visit all the

relatives, and bring Henry Ward back with you in August," said Dr. Beecher.

Nothing ever put Harriet in gala mood like planning or taking a trip, and this would be especially wonderful—back to beloved New England, with a glimpse of Niagara on the way. The girls would go by stage to Toledo, boat to Buffalo, and then—why not?—take the new steam railway between Albany and Schenectady. But Aunt Esther implored the girls not to be so venturesome, and they promised to stick to the trusty stagecoach.

They were glad to be starting northward, leaving Cincinnati sweltering in an early heat wave, with a few cases of cholera already reported.

"We're escaping just in time," said Mary.

And they were escaping from a greater plague—Negro slavery, thought Harriet, as she wrenched her eyes from a huge poster on the wall of the stagecoach office. It announced that a Kentucky slave-trader was buying Negroes for the New Orleans market, and would pay twelve hundred dollars for first-class young men, and eight hundred for young women. But escape was not easy. Everywhere people were talking slavery—Abolition, States' Rights, property rights, politics—all were tied up with slavery. Two fellow-passengers engaged in a long and bitter argument as to whether Negroes were people, with human feelings, or only live stock, and nearly came to blows over it. Harriet could hardly keep out of the argument.

Niagara Falls were magnificent beyond imagining, and Harriet wrote in her journal ecstatic praises of the sight.

Then on to Amherst, to greet her favorite brother, of whom she had seen so little for four years.

Henry Ward had not outgrown his plumpness, but now he was tall, as well. He lifted Harriet high as he swung her from the coach, and his ruddy face beamed as he shouted, "Good old Sis! She's here to help her little brother Commence!"

As Harriet joyfully embraced him, she saw he was not alone. At his elbow was a tall young woman, obviously waiting to be introduced.

"Hattie, this is Eunice Bullard. She's down for Commencement, too. Her brother is my classmate."

"I'm happy to know you, Miss Beecher," murmured the stranger, extending a limp and icy hand. "Henry speaks of you so often."

"I know you girls'll get on well together," said Henry, smiling a trifle nervously. "You're both teachers, and—er—fond of the ministry, in a way . . ." His voice trailed off, for the girls, ignoring him, were taking each other's measure.

Harriet was not at all sure she would get on well with Eunice Bullard. "She's too tall, for one thing . . . *imposing* is the word," thought Harriet. "She's extremely elegant, and laced so tight, she makes me feel dumpy and dowdy. But I wonder why she wears her hair so plain?"

While everyone wore side-curls, Eunice had a smooth center-parting, with a bun in back. Her large, square face, with close-set eyes, strong jaw and firm, thin mouth, looked oddly unadorned. Still, Harriet had to admit that the effect she achieved was something like distinction.

Eunice took Henry's arm with a possessive air, and the trio moved slowly down the elm-shaded street.

"Do tell me what the West is like, Miss Beecher. I may be going there myself some day," trilled Eunice, with a girlish giggle unsuited to her age and height. And what a stupid question, Harriet thought—as if one could describe it all in a sentence!

"It's very different from what most people imagine," she replied smoothly. "I've just seen Niagara Falls, and—"

"And you'll now start writing descriptions of it, like everyone else," jibed Henry. "Have I told you, Eunice, that Hattie writes?"

"Indeed?" drawled Eunice. "It's becoming very fashionable nowadays. I'll have to take it up sometime. Did you know Henry Ward is to deliver the Valedictory tomorrow?"

"No! Not really?" gasped Harriet, recalling her brother's shy and tongue-tied boyhood.

"It's a fact," said Henry proudly. "And what's more, I found today that I stood next to the head of the class."

"Henry, that's wonderful!"

"Of course, we were standing in a circle!" he chuckled.

It was true, though, about the Valedictory address. Henry Ward had not only overcome his speech defect, but was developing into a fine orator. With success in this field had come self-assurance, and his wit and friendliness had made him very popular. Too popular, thought Harriet, who waited impatiently for a chance to talk with him alone. Even then he talked of Eunice.

"What do you think of her, Sis? Isn't she handsome?"

"Indeed she is, in a way," replied Harriet, guardedly.

"She's intelligent, too. She has the most magnificent bumps!"

"Bumps? Whatever do you mean, Henry Ward?"

"Why, cranial bumps, on the skull. Don't you know about phrenology? It's a new science, based on the shape of the head. You can read character that way. Phrenology is all the rage now."

"It sounds interesting."

"You needn't tell Father—he'd call it nonsense—but I've been giving public lectures on it, and doing character readings. I've earned some money that way."

"What do you see in my bumps?" asked Harriet.

"I'll give you a good reading sometime when your hair is down. I can't see your head now for all those silly curls. Eunice gave up wearing curls after she took up phrenology, and found I didn't like them."

"She *must* be in love with you, Henry. Are you—surely you're not engaged?"

"Well, yes and no. Depends on what I get into. She thinks I have a great future in the ministry, but I don't know. I'd rather go in for politics."

"Isn't Eunice much older than you, Henry?"

"Yes, nearly eight years, but she says that doesn't matter. She believes in me, Hattie."

"Oh, dear," thought Harriet. "Maybe Henry will forget her after he's been in Ohio awhile. Why couldn't he have fallen in love with someone like Mary Dutton?"

But she was very proud of her brother when she heard

him speak before the Commencement audience. He had warmth and magnetism, and his father's power to make even a trivial utterance sound wise and important. It was amazing. The least promising of the Beecher boys now seemed likely to excel them all—in oratory, though not in intellect.

Weeks later, a letter from home caught up with Harriet, happily making her New England rounds—a letter with shocking news. There was a new grave in Lane's cemetery. Before her honeymoon year had ended, Eliza Stowe was dead.

XVI

THE RETURN TRIP to Cincinnati, by way of Wheeling and the river, was accomplished in record time—ten days. But to Harriet it seemed too short, for she had the companionship of her two dearest brothers. Charles had begged his father to let him come out and attend Lane with Henry Ward that year.

"Not that I'm keen about studying for the ministry," he told her. "Music is the only thing for me; but I do want to be with you all, and see the West."

"Uncle Samuel says out there the children rule their parents," laughed Harriet, "so you've made a good beginning. Father thinks the Lane students are a lawless lot—always getting up petitions. And since Theodore Weld and his gang enrolled, they try to run everything."

On arriving, the travellers found that serious trouble had broken out at Lane Seminary. Taking advantage of Dr. Beecher's absence on a fund-raising tour, Weld had organized an Abolition Society, and shocked the town by entertaining parties of Negroes at the school. The trustees, alarmed, had put a ban on all discussion of slavery inside the college, and Weld had withdrawn, taking the student body with him.

When Dr. Beecher returned, jubilant over the funds he had collected for a new chapel and library, he found he had no students.

"Let 'em go!" he shouted. "Good riddance. We'll get others. I'll carry on, even if there's nobody in classes but my own sons!"

But that was not the worst of it. The affair got into the papers, Dr. Beecher receiving all the blame, and being branded as a slavery sympathizer. Garrison, glad of a chance to avenge an old slight, attacked Lyman, and declared Lane "A Bastille of oppression."

The Beechers were justly indignant. It had been the trustees' fault; but the Beecher boys argued that students had a right to free speech. Lyman grumbled that he was running a theological school, not a debating society, but he did have the ban on free discussion revoked. It was too late, however, to save the good name of Lane. The wealthy Abolitionists who supported it were viewing it with suspicion.

"It'll all blow over," said Lyman to Esther, who urged him to resign and go back East. "Why, we've even got a

Negro student—the only divinity school in America to admit Negroes. That ought to please the anti-slavery folks. If not, we'll draw students from the South. Weld thinks he can shake me loose here, and take my place, but he's mistaken."

The situation made light work for Lane's faculty, but Professor Stowe was too distraught over the loss of Eliza to notice how small his classes were. Aunt Esther, who had attended Eliza in her last illness, urged the Beechers to be especially nice to the poor man, and Lyman, remembering his own desolation after Roxana's death, said, "We must look after him—ask him to Sunday dinners—and find something extra for him to do, to occupy his mind."

He arranged for Calvin to give a series of Bible lectures at his church. These would appear in condensed form in the local papers, and Harriet could act as reporter. Of course, to get them just right, she must confer often with the Professor. While working together on this material, Harriet and Calvin had ample time to speak of other matters, chiefly of the virtues and graces of the lost Eliza. Her heart went out to the bereaved husband, and she said every comforting word she could think of, or listened gravely to his accounts of his courtship, and of his bride's last illness. So young and beautiful to die! Harriet mourned her friend sincerely.

ANOTHER TRIP enlivened them that fall—one to be long remembered, though in prospect it was not exciting. The Presbyterian Synod held a meeting at Ripley,

Ohio, a few miles up the river. Dr. Beecher and Professor Stowe attended, taking Harriet along to report the sessions for the paper. They were to be house guests of Rev. John Rankin.

His home was outside the village, perched on the edge of a high bluff overlooking the river. The view was magnificent. It was October, and the Kentucky hills across the river were clothed in rich colors—gold and russet, and the vivid scarlet of maples. The placid Ohio was golden by day, and silver by night under the harvest moon.

It was a time and place for romance, as Brother Rankin and his guests sat late on the shadowy veranda. A lamp in the window illuminated the strong features of Calvin Stowe, deepening the cleft in his chin.

"You must be weary, Miss Harriet," said their host. "If you wish to retire, your bed is ready."

"Oh, no, Brother Rankin, I'm not tired," she answered gaily. "I think I'm never truly awake till after dark."

"I'm much the same way," observed Calvin. "I do my best work at night. I believe that's true of most brain workers."

"And I thought I was unique," sighed Harriet. It was amazing how many things they had in common, she and Calvin Stowe.

"In other respects, I think you are," smiled Calvin.

Harriet wanted very much to ask him how, but their elders were discussing slavery.

"Have you been reading of that trial in Tennessee?" said John Rankin. "A planter named Meek sued his over-

seer for flogging a valuable slave to death over some petty offense. He won, and collected the price of the slave."

"What did they do to the overseer?" asked Dr. Beecher.

"Nothing, except make him pay for the slave—and trial costs."

"You mean, he wasn't charged with murder?" cried Harriet.

"Not at all. Slaves are property, not human beings, according to the laws of Tennessee."

Harriet grew tense, and her small hands twisted her cambric handkerchief into a knot.

"How can men be so unjust—so cruel to one another?" she burst out. "Surely there are enough merciful people in the world to stop this dreadful thing!"

"The day of reckoning will come," said Calvin. "The Lord still reigns."

"Ah, yes!" sighed Lyman. "But the Devil tries to."

"If there was only something we could do," said Harriet. "Something to lighten the misery close by us, even a little . . ."

In the pause which followed, John Rankin cleared his throat uneasily, and shifted in his chair.

"I believe I can trust you people not to talk," he began, "though if this ever got out, it would mean a prison term for me. Something is being done, of a very secret nature. Have you heard of the Underground Railroad?"

They never had.

"It isn't an organization, exactly, but it functions like one. The purpose is to help escaping slaves reach Canada,

and freedom. From the Ohio to the Canadian border, there are men like me, willing to risk the hardships and dangers of harboring fugitives, and smuggling them on to the next station. We are law-breakers, it's true, but we choose to break man-made laws in the interests of God's eternal Justice."

"That's splendid, Brother Rankin," exclaimed Dr. Beecher. "Takes real courage for a clergyman to have a hand in it. Tell us how it works."

"Well, the position of my house here is excellent. It's isolated from the village, but can be seen for miles along the Kentucky side. You see that lamp in the window? It's always kept burning, and every Negro knows what it means. A boatman rows the fugitives across, and shows them the goat-path up this bluff. My wife feeds the runaways, and my sons take them on to a friend of mine in Greenfield. I figure, in the past year, I've helped close to a hundred."

"You must have heard their stories. Why do most slaves run away?" Harriet wanted to know.

"For two reasons. Ill treatment occasionally, but more often it is to avoid being sold, and separated from their loved ones. Whole families will come through the Underground, one by one, hoping to be reunited in Canada."

"And they say slaves have no human feelings!" cried Harriet.

"Of course they don't always make it," Rankin went on. "We had one narrow escape last spring. A young mulatto woman nearly got me into trouble. The river was frozen clear across—it's half a mile wide here—but an early thaw

had set in, with the ice cracking and water running over it.

"This young slave woman came down to the bank, carrying her baby. The ferryman showed her my light, but warned her not to try to cross, as the ice might break up any minute. She paid no heed, but started running. It was so slippery she fell every few steps, and was soaked to the skin in that icy water, but she managed to hang on to the baby. The Lord must have guided her feet in the darkness, and brought her safe to my house. A few minutes later we heard the crack and roar of the ice going out."

"That's as thrilling as any storybook adventure!" cried Harriet.

"But that wasn't the end. The woman's pursuers, with their bloodhounds, reached the south bank, and couldn't cross till next day. They were certain the girl had perished in the river, but the hounds picked up the scent on the path. There they found a shawl she had had around the baby, so they knew she was alive, and came to search my house. But the woman was halfway to Greenfield by that time." He chuckled with pride and satisfaction.

"Did she ever get to Canada?" Harriet wanted to know.

"Oh, yes, and her husband came through a few weeks later, and joined her. So the tale had a happy ending."

"It's good to know there are men like you in the world, Brother Rankin," said Harriet.

In a moment she had slipped away, down the flagstone path to the picket gate. There she leaned, looking down at the peaceful, moon-lit river. She was seeing it as it had been that wild March night, with a desperate woman fleeing

across the treacherous surface, to fall exhausted on free soil—another picture of slavery added to her memory's store.

Her gaze rested on the farther shore. Beyond those dark hills lay the vast South . . . thousands of souls in bondage. When would their blood and tears be avenged? "Here it is, Sunday night," she thought, "and at this very moment the slaves of Brentwood plantation are singing, 'Let my people go!' Oh, dear Lord, where is their Moses? Send them a Moses, soon!"

AND at that moment, on an Illinois prairie, a tall young man lay face downward, for the last time, on a narrow grave bearing the name, "Anne Rutledge."

XVII

THE HOUSE at Walnut Hills was gay that winter. There was Charley with his violin, Henry Ward with his boisterous wit, and on week-ends, Calvin Stowe with his Yankee drolleries. The irrepressible Beecher spirits helped the young widower become somewhat reconciled to the loss of his wife. Under Harriet's gentle urging, he even wrote what proved to be the outstanding sketch of the year among contributions to the Semi-Colon Club.

This was a true account of his childhood in Natick, Massachusetts, revealing him as a boy mystic, with pleasant unseen playmates, and visions of angels and devils, alarm-

ingly real. The listeners were startled and impressed by the psychic powers of the solid young Professor, and no one more than Harriet.

His early struggles with poverty had been greater than her own, she reflected, but so had his compensations. How often in Litchfield she had longed to see her mother, or tried in vain to envision Heaven and Hell. She began to regard Calvin Stowe with new interest.

At thirty-two he was stocky, and baldish at the forehead—not a romantic figure in the eyes of the average girl. But Harriet was not an average girl, and had noticed that handsome men often lacked character. Calvin was well liked by everyone. He not only looked solid, he was solid, mentally and spiritually, she felt sure. And yet, the thing about him which most appealed to her was his masculine helplessness. He was never cut out for a bachelor.

Mary Dutton could scent romance a mile away. "My, but you're perky these days, Harriet," she teased. "Can it be that you're in love?"

"Without your experience, I wouldn't recognize the symptoms," parried Harriet.

"Oh, 'fess up, now. Professor Stowe, isn't it?"

"Our newspaper work brings us together a great deal, and I—enjoy his company, that's all," stated Harriet primly.

"You aren't fooling me. I always said you'd marry a professor, and here's a fine chance. You'd better start trying to bring him to the point!"

"Why, Mary Dutton!" Harriet was genuinely shocked. "His wife hasn't been dead a year yet!"

"All right, darling, I'll stop pestering you. But remember, I want to be your bridesmaid."

Mary was not alone in her suspicions. Now the family match-makers were busy. Aunt Elizabeth, inventing excuses to get her niece and the nice Professor off in corners . . . Aunt Esther, shooing Tommy out of the parlor . . .

Harriet fumed inwardly.

"As if they thought I was setting my cap for Calvin Stowel!" she thought. "It's ridiculous! He was too fond of Eliza ever to look at another woman, especially a plain little thing like me. He just likes to talk to me about Eliza, that's all. Why, he's nine years older than I am . . . but that wouldn't matter. I'd want a husband I could look up to, and any man who reads six languages, including Sanskrit and ancient Hebrew, deserves admiration. What have I to offer to a man like that?"

Just the same, she knew in her heart that Calvin needed her. The knowledge was sweet.

But as winter gave way to spring, the Beechers, especially the men, had other things to think about than Harriet's budding romance. They were never too busy to read the papers, and the papers were full of exciting news: a man who went up in a gas-filled balloon and floated three hundred and fifty miles; a proposed steam railway from Cincinnati to the Carolina Tidewater; a steamer that sank with eight slaves chained in the hold . . .

"I see here our revolutionist friend, Weld, was mobbed in Circleville, trying to lecture on Abolition," observed Henry Ward over the pages of the *Gazette*.

"Abolition isn't very popular anywhere," said Charley, "and here Editor Brainerd tells why. He scores it on eight counts."

Harriet looked up from the student compositions she was marking, to ask what they were.

"He says: (1) Immediate emancipation would be politically unwise, and disastrous to the Negroes themselves; (2) Abolition methods are all wrong, and don't try to conciliate Southern Christians; (3) they incite to violence and civil war—here, read it for yourself."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Harriet. "Could it actually lead to civil war?"

"If it does, the Abolitionists will be to blame," replied Charles. "That's what my classmate, Andrews, says. He's from Louisiana, but he's anti-Abolition, and favors gradual emancipation—or did."

"I'm afraid the sane and moderate people have been indifferent too long," said Harriet. "While we slept, the fanatics have taken up the cudgel. What we need is a third party, in between."

"That's right, Sis," agreed Henry Ward. "You catch more flies with molasses than with Abolition vinegar."

"Vinegar?" cried Lyman Beecher, striding quickly into the room. "Abolition is a mixture of vinegar, aqua fortis and vitriol, with brimstone and saltpetre added to explode the rest. Why, in three years, that group has destroyed all that the churches and Colonization Societies had built up in thirty."

"But Father, the political picture has changed a lot in

thirty years," said Charles. "The old methods were outworn."

"Makes no difference. Human nature's the same, and it never helps to antagonize people. Only t'other day I had a letter from Rev. Witherspoon of South Carolina. He agrees with me that slavery is a curse, but he is ready to fight, if necessary, against Northern interference. That shows you how the wind's blowing."

"Do you think it could ever really come to war?" asked Harriet.

"No, I don't think so. But I have a little war of my own just now," added Dr. Beecher grimly. "My Old-School enemy, Dr. Wilson, has fired the first shot—a summons to stand trial before the Presbytery, on charges of slander, hypocrisy and heresy!"

Heresy trials were not uncommon then; anyone who differed on a minor point of doctrine was called heretic, and forced to explain his views. Since the verdict rested on a majority vote of the churchmen, politics played a large part. While it was no great disgrace to be found guilty, the offender was barred from all pulpits of that denomination, and had trouble finding a new one.

"Oh, Father!" groaned Harriet. "With all the trouble at Lane, this is just too much!"

"If you lose the trial, will we have to go back East?" asked Henry.

"I don't intend to lose," replied his father grimly. "I'll be ready for 'em. They're basing the charges on a sermon I published ten years ago. I'll hunt it up, and prepare my

defense. Come to the study, Henry. You can help me." He hurried out.

"Well, Charley, maybe we won't have to go into the ministry after all," chuckled Henry as he followed Dr. Beecher. "But I'm betting on Father to outwit 'em!"

"We mustn't let Mother know about this, Charles," sighed Harriet, when they were alone. "I do believe it would kill her."

"I don't believe she wants to live. She just lies there."

"She's always hated the West."

"If Father is thrown out, we'll all have cause to hate it," said Charles, bitterly. "I've already come to hate the Church. It's all absurd doctrine and rotten politics. I'll never be a minister."

"But George passed his examinations in spite of that."

"Yes, after they'd heckled him for four hours, and had him swearing black was white. I don't want any part of it. I'll worship my own God, in my own way."

"What is your God like, Charley?"

"Well, it's hard to explain, but He's nothing like the Presbyterians'. My God is vast—impersonal. I find Him in music, and sunshine and trees—"

"And in Justice, and Peace, and Love?"

"That's it. You do understand, Hattie. I guess we're both heretics. You know what I plan to do? This will really shock you. I'm going to quit school, and go to work—down South."

"But Charley! Why the South? Why not go back East?"

"I used to love New England, when we were children,

but it's different since we left Litchfield. Nothing but politics, mobs, riots, strife between the churches. I came West to get away from all that."

"But here along the border, there's much more strife."

"I know. There's unrest in the South, too, but perhaps if I go as far down as New Orleans—I have friends there, who'll give me a start—I can find some sort of peace. There'll be warmth, and laughter, and ease and gracious living—"

"But remember, all that luxury and ease is made possible by slave labor."

"Oh, I won't go pro-slavery, never fear. But I'd like to study both sides at first hand. My best friend is a planter's son, and he talks as if the South is Paradise. I love the river, too—drifting lazy in the sun, hearing the Negroes singing on the levee. I want to learn those melodies, and write them down. I might become a strolling minstrel, and fiddle for my supper. Hattie, don't you see . . . ?"

Remembering Brentwood, Harriet sighed. "I do see, Charley. But we can't run away from life. Sooner or later we must stand and face it."

"Let it be later, then. Now, I must go away—be myself, and not a Beecher. Haven't you ever felt that way?"

"Many times. But I've never had the chance . . . or the courage."

"It's harder for a girl. Father will disown me, I suppose, but he won't know till after I am gone. I couldn't bear a scene."

"Charley, you mustn't go now. It would seem like deserting him when he needs us most."

"Oh, of course. I'll try to stick it out here till I'm twenty-one. Then I'll skip down the river one day, and you can explain to the family. Don't look so sad, Hattie. I'll come back."

"I know you will. You're a Beecher, and Roxana's son."

LYMAN BEECHER won his trial, but the victory was only temporary.

"They'll bring it up before the Assembly next," he said. "Wilson may have a majority there. He won't rest till he unfrocks me, or the Church splits."

"I hope it explodes, into little bits!" cried Charles.

"It was great to watch Father wriggle out of the tight places," laughed Henry. "The Old Schoolites were no match for him."

But Harriet was sad. "Poor Father," she thought. "All his fine dreams of winning the West have come to naught!"

All this meant nothing to Mrs. Beecher. She turned her face to the wall, and died quietly, as she had lived. Her passing made little change in the house at Walnut Hills, for she had long since withdrawn from the affairs of this life, and fixed her eyes upon the next.

But the twice-widowed Lyman Beecher was lonely and despondent. Life had been dealing harshly with him of late, and the children laid plans to cheer him up. They decided to hold a family reunion.

For the first and last time, all of Lyman's children met under one roof. Some of them had never seen the younger

members of the second brood. All except Mary were in the West now, for William had recently come out to preach at Putnam, Ohio. He and Edward had new wives to introduce, and George was to be married soon.

The city made much of the event. Friends sent in choice foods, reporters interviewed them, photographers snapped them in every possible grouping. There was much talk and laughter, and singing of hymns.

Lyman ranged his children in a circle—eleven of them, from Kate, aged thirty-five, to Jamie, aged seven. He gazed at them fondly, and tried to pray. But emotion overcame him, and George had to finish.

Kate had arranged little ceremonies, where each should describe his own character, or relate his fortunes. When it came Harriet's turn, Kate spoke for both of them. After describing her own campaign for Female Education, she finished, "Little Harriet has published two stories, one a prize-winner. And our Geography for children, which she wrote most of, has sold a hundred thousand copies, and been introduced into all schools in the West."

The Beechers buzzed with surprise and approval, and the in-laws stared as if seeing Harriet for the first time.

"She can make a good living writing textbooks, if she'll only take it up seriously," ended Kate.

"You will, then, won't you, Hattie?" asked Mary Perkins.

All eyes were upon Harriet, as they waited for her to speak. She sat up very straight, and took a deep breath.

"No, I don't think I shall," she said clearly. "You see, I am going to marry Calvin Stowe!"

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT surprised no one so much as Kate, who had been away most of that year. As soon as she had an opportunity, she hastened to talk it over with Aunt Esther.

"What does she see in Calvin Stowe? He's so much older, and a widower, too."

"I know," sighed Aunt Esther. "The poor child has worn second-hand clothes most of her life, and now she's to have a second-hand husband. But don't discourage her, Kate. Stowe's a fine man, and likely her best chance."

"But why should she marry at all? She has her school work, her writing, and the family."

"All women aren't like you, Kate. They want someone of their own, someone who needs them. And if anyone ever needed a wife, it's Calvin Stowe. They'll probably be as happy as most, or happier."

"But Harriet knows absolutely nothing about managing a house. They won't have much to live on, unless Lane picks up."

"Poverty is nothing new to the Beechers, or the Stowes either. They can always go back East."

Kate sighed. "We must make the best of it. When is the wedding?"

"They haven't set the date. Calvin may be sent to Europe soon, to buy books for the Lane library."

What painful memories these words aroused in Kate! It had been just such a mission that had forever postponed her own marriage thirteen years before. Could history be repeating itself? She went straight to Harriet.

"I'm thinking of withdrawing my name from the school," she told her. "I've bigger things in mind. We'll soon find a teacher in your place, so go ahead and get married whenever you like."

"Oh, but I don't plan to be married for a long while yet," said Harriet. "Eliza has been gone only fourteen months, and it wouldn't be showing proper respect."

"A year is considered long enough."

"But Calvin was so very fond of her, and I was, too. I think we'll wait another year, or at least until Calvin gets back from Europe."

After a pause, Kate said gravely, "I never speak of this, but you force me to bring it up. Harriet, do you remember what happened when I postponed my wedding because my fiancé was being sent to Europe? It has been my life-long regret that I didn't marry him at once. We might have had a few months of happiness together. It was—all my fault." Kate's voice was husky.

"Poor dear," murmured Harriet, her arms about her sister. "Your life has been very sad. But not wasted. You're doing great good in the world."

"Harriet, don't make the same mistake. Promise me you'll marry your Professor before he sails."

"I will, Kate. I'll set the day soon."

"And please forgive me, if I don't come to your wedding. I don't think I could bear it."

Harriet needed time to get used to this idea. For years she had been resigned to being an old maid, and now she was going to the altar before either Georgiana May or Mary

Dutton. It was incredible, but also frightening. She wished this happy period of engagement might go on and on, before she must step forth into the strange and untried future. Then, too, there was the sub-conscious fear that she could never quite fill Eliza Tyler's place.

The wedding day was set for early January. It would be a simple home wedding—just the family, with Mary Dutton and Henry Ward as attendants. Mary was overjoyed at the news, but a little envious.

"I've never received a proposal from a Professor of Sacred Literature," she said. "What was it like? Did he go down on his knees and call you his angel?"

"Not exactly," answered Harriet, with a sphinx-like smile. "But he said, among other things, that I was the most intelligent and agreeable woman of his acquaintance."

"I don't call that very romantic," pouted Mary.

"Romance is found only in books," countered Harriet.

"You're so right, darling. The lads who make the pretty speeches never mean them. Well, what are you going to be married in?"

"My traveling dress. Something dark and practical for our trip to Columbus. Calvin is lecturing there, and the roads will be frightfully muddy."

"No veil, or anything? You'd look beautiful in white silk."

"It would be a waste of money, just for you and the family. Calvin never notices what I wear. I need other things much worse: feather beds, and a set of good dishes—"

"How domestic you are already!" complained Mary.

"January is a horrid month for a wedding. Why couldn't you wait till June, and do it up brown?"

"Calvin is leaving for Europe in April."

"And he isn't taking you with him? I'd see about that!"

"I'd give my eye-teeth to go, of course, but there isn't enough money. Lane can't even pay all his salary. This trip is financed by the State Legislature. They want Calvin to study higher education in Europe. It's a great honor."

"It is not! It's a crying shame!" said Mary. "Spending your honeymoon year alone."

"I don't mind," said Harriet. "I can go back to Father's."

But she did mind, terribly. She would never get to see Europe!

On the day of her wedding, Harriet penned a hasty note to Georgiana—a farewell gesture to girlhood:

Well, my dear, about half an hour more, and your old friend and schoolmate will cease to be Hattie Beecher, and change into nobody knows who. You are pledged in a year or two to encounter a similar fate. Do you wish to know how you will feel? Well, I have been dreading the time—lying awake all last week wondering how I should live through this overwhelming crisis—and lo, it has come, and I feel *nothing at all*. It is really a mercy to have this complete stupidity come over me now. But I vowed that my last feelings and reflections on this subject should be yours, and as I haven't got any, it is just as well to tell you *that*. But here comes Mr. S. So farewell. For the last time I subscribe,

Your own

January 6, 1836

H. E. B.

Part IV

**SCATTERING
LEAVES**

1850-1853



PART IV

SCATTERING
LEAVES

1850-1853

XVIII

FOURTEEN YEARS LATER, on a spring evening in 1850, Professor Thomas Upham and his wife sat by their fireside in Brunswick, Maine, discussing the day's doings at Bowdoin College.

"We're soon to have a new faculty member, my dear," said the Professor. "Calvin Ellis Stowe, star of the class of '24, is returning to accept the Collins Professorship."

"Class of '24?" mused his wife. "Wasn't that Henry Longfellow's class—and Nathaniel Hawthorne's?"

"No, they were '25. Franklin Pierce was '24. He says the only way he got through his examinations was by sitting next to Stowe. Everyone thought Stowe had the most promising future of them all, but . . ." Professor Upham shrugged and sighed. ". . . one can never tell."

"What happened to him?"

"He's been in the West—virtually buried at Lane Seminary, that feeble little divinity school of Lyman Beecher's at Cincinnati."

"Why on earth did he stay there?" queried Mrs. Upham.

"Nobody knows. Loyalty to his father-in-law, no doubt. He married one of the Beecher girls."

"Oh, yes. Isn't she the one who published that collection of New England character studies years ago? *Mayflower*, I think it was called."

"That's the one. I suspect they're pretty hard up. Have a large family, I understand, and Stowe's salary has been inadequate."

"But, Thomas, the Collins Professorship is the lowest paying of any at Bowdoin. He can't support a family on that. Where will they live?"

"The old Titcomb house on Federal Street is the only vacant place near the campus. It rents for a hundred a year."

"But it's in very bad condition. It would need a lot of work to make it livable. Thomas, why don't we invite the Stowes to stop with us while they're getting settled?"

"Can you manage? They have five children."

"Of course I can. We ought to do something for the poor things."

THAT same evening a messenger boy rang the bell at the handsome home of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. Eunice, his wife, took the envelope, and stared at it with alarm. A tele-

graph message! It was the first she had ever seen, and she hastened to her husband's study, all of a tremble.

"Henry, here's one of those new what-you-call-'ems. For you."

"A telegram? Well, why don't you open it?" He added acidly, "Heaven knows, you open all the rest of my mail."

"I—I was afraid it might be bad news," faltered Eunice.

Henry Ward read the message hastily. "No, not bad news. Sister Harriet and three of her children are stopping off here on their way to Maine. They're arriving tonight."

"That's certainly not *good* news," snorted Eunice, "but it's better than if they were all coming."

"I wish you liked my family better," said Henry, irritably.

Eunice shrugged her silk-clad shoulders. "Let's not go into that again. Most of them understand by now that they can't use our house for a hotel. Harriet is the most harmless one of the tribe, but if the Stowes are as shabby-looking as when we last saw them, it will be embarrassing to introduce them to our parishioners."

"I know; but remember, Eunice, we were pretty threadbare ourselves not so long ago. Let's see . . . I have a lecture on tonight. I'll send Augustus to meet them at the ferry."

"Don't send the new carriage, Henry. Those children will soil the cushions. If they stay very long, I don't know what I'll do!"

Henry's handsome face darkened. "You'll entertain them politely, that's what you'll do, Madam. I'm a busy man, but with four servants, you have plenty of time to be so-

ciable. You can tell Harriet all about our trip to Europe. She'll be impressed."

"Oh, very well, just this once," said Eunice. "But I hope I'm not obliged to appear with her in public."

"Maybe she'll give me some help with my column material," muttered Henry, returning to his desk. "Or an idea for a sermon . . ."

A few hours later, Eunice Beecher stood in her wide doorway, wearing a forced smile and her third-best dress, to greet her sister-in-law. A cab stopped by the hitching post, and out of it tumbled a chubby lad of ten (that would be Freddy, thought Eunice), a slim, agile sprite of seven (Georgiana), followed more slowly by two unfashionable female figures of equal height (the twins?). Then with a start Eunice realized that one of the pair was Harriet, more shabby than ever, and now travel-stained and weary.

As the forlorn group straggled up the steps, Eunice relented a little. She resolved to be nice to them if it killed her.

"Gracious me, Harriet," she cried. "How these children have grown. Which one of the twins is this? I never could tell them apart."

"This is my namesake, Hatty," replied Harriet. "Eliza and Harry are with their father. My, but I'm glad to get here. We had no sleep at all last night."

"Mama, tell her about the funny station man," shrilled Georgiana. "Aunt Eunice, he put us out—"

"Hush, Georgie," said the thirteen-year-old twin, whose regular duty it was to try to suppress the irrepressible child.

Harriet laughed. "We had a train connection to make at two in the morning, with four hours to wait. We were so tired, we stretched out on the benches in the waiting room to catch a wink of sleep. I tied my shawl around my head, and we'd just got comfortable, when the station agent made us get out. From his remarks I gathered he took us for tramps, or an immigrant family."

No wonder, thought Eunice, trying in vain to muster a smile. She gave them supper, and hustled them off to bed—all but Harriet, who insisted on staying up for Henry Ward's return from his lecture.

"You wouldn't believe how popular Henry is," bragged Eunice, while they waited. "He's the idol of his congregation. They've raised his salary to thirty-three hundred dollars, and when we returned from Europe, they presented us with a fine horse and carriage, as a welcome-home gift."

Harriet was sincerely pleased, but she couldn't help remembering the time twelve years before, when she and Calvin had shared their meager possessions with Henry and Eunice, who were just setting up housekeeping in Indiana. Henry had come a long way since then, but Eunice seemed to take credit for it.

The two women chatted of such things as the tremendous size of hoop-skirts, the probable future of the Bloomer costume, Jenny Lind's concert tour. Her manager, P. T. Barnum, was selling the tickets at auction.

"Wouldn't I love to hear her sing!" sighed Harriet. "Are you going, Eunice?"

"Oh, no, not at Barnum's prices," declared Eunice. "We

heard her in Europe, very cheaply, so I wouldn't think of going here."

At last Henry Ward came home. The years had changed him, but not for the better, thought his sister. At thirty-six he was handsomer than ever, but the pompousness of the successful orator clung to him, even when off the platform. He was driving himself hard, and the strain of constantly playing a part was beginning to tell. He didn't look very happy, decided Harriet, pityingly.

He, in turn, was sorry for her. How worn and faded she looked! Life had defeated her, he decided. His manner was cordial, but a trifle patronizing.

"So you're moving back East, at last! Where's that old stick-in-the-mud, Calvin?"

"He must finish out the term at Lane," Harriet answered. "I came on ahead. I wouldn't risk another summer in Cincinnati, after losing one child in the cholera scourge. I'm expecting another this summer, and I hope to be all settled in Brunswick by then."

"You're brave, I must say," admitted Eunice. "Doing it all alone."

"Calvin wouldn't be much help. The twins are splendid workers—they're nearly fourteen, you know, and Harry is twelve. He and Eliza stayed to look after their father."

"And now what will Father Beecher do, without his right-hand man?"

"He plans to resign, and come back to Boston. Then we'll all be back, except brother Charley. He's still preaching at Ft. Wayne."

"Strange fellow, Charley," observed Henry. "After seven years in business in New Orleans, I never thought he'd turn to the ministry."

"I believe it was George's tragic death that did it," said Harriet. "When he came back for the funeral, and saw how broken up Father was, he stayed on. Of course, since the Church split, he had no trouble in being ordained."

"Once a Beecher, always a Beecher," said Henry, pompously. "There's no escape."

At this point Eunice, bored with the topic of Beechers, quietly took herself off to bed, leaving brother and sister to their reminiscences.

"Do you know I'm a columnist now, Hattie? Right on the front page of the New York *Independent*? Largest circulation in the East. My contributions cover sermonettes, travel notes, current topics—anything. They're proving exceedingly popular."

"Do you remember the summer in Cincinnati, when I helped you edit the *Journal*? You were looking for something to attack in your editorials, and Aunt Esther urged you to start a campaign against spitting tobacco juice in public places!"

"Ah, yes," Henry chuckled. "And how scared she was when she found me in her kitchen making bullets, during those press riots. I was a two-gun man for weeks."

"I was scared, too," smiled Harriet. "After the mob threw Birney's printing press into the river, I thought yours would be next. But it was all in the cause of free speech, and I was proud of you."

"Remember how we helped your fugitive slave girl escape on the Underground Railroad . . . and the race riots? Those were stirring times along the border," said Henry, half-regretfully.

"Far too much so," shuddered his sister. "I'm glad I've left all that behind. Maybe I'll find peace in New England."

"I'm afraid you won't, Sis. Not if this Compromise Bill is passed by Congress. It contains new Fugitive Slave laws."

"What's new about them? Ohio always had them."

"These are much more strict. It would be a federal offense not to *assist* in the capture of runaways. Ned says Boston is full of slaves, and there'll be an awful row up there if the bill passes. Ned is preaching and writing against it with all his might. He's about the only clergyman who is."

"Good for Ned. He has courage. What are you doing, Henry?"

"Me? Oh, I believe as Father did, you shouldn't mix politics and religion. Webster just lately told the Senate that slavery was a political, not a moral issue."

"I don't care who said it, it's a wicked falsehood, and you know it! Aren't you going to challenge it?"

"Can't afford to. When I mention slavery at all, I say leave it alone, but draw a line around it."

"The line won't stay drawn. You're hiding behind glib phrases, because you're afraid to say what you believe. Henry Ward Beecher, I'm ashamed of you!"

For a moment Henry was abashed. It was as if he were a small, stupid boy again, and had muffed his Latin lesson.

"You don't understand, Hattie. Women know nothing of

politics. This bill has some advantages. By admitting California as a free state, it gives the North a Congressional majority, and—"

"Right is right, and wrong is wrong, for all their political juggling." Harriet's eyes flashed. "Get down off the fence, Henry Ward, and take your stand for the right. Oh, I wish I were a man!"

Henry saw he had been mistaken about his sister. The hard years had not defeated her, nor weakened her spiritual fiber. Instead, they had made it tense and strong. Moreover, he knew in his heart that her convictions were right.

The kindly Mrs. Upham was waiting at Maquoit's Landing to meet the Stowes, and take them home with her. They traversed the three miles into Brunswick in a cold, driving rain.

"It looks like we're in for a blow," she observed cheerfully. "A real old nor'easter."

They were. The storm lasted a week, and delayed the ship bearing the Stowes' household goods. To the children, who wanted to explore this New England of their father's stories, it was annoying. But for Harriet it meant a well-earned rest, and strength flowed back into her. She loved the Uphams; she knew she would love Brunswick . . . if only the salary had been a little larger!

Mrs. Upham grew fond of Harriet and the children, too—such a cultured family, and so well-behaved. She took charge of getting the old house on Federal Street ready, and tried to think of ways to improve their finances without hurting Harriet's pride.

"I enjoyed your *Mayflower* sketches so much," she remarked. "When are you going to write more?"

"Those were girlhood efforts," replied Harriet. "I've given up literary work. If I write at all, it's only some trivial bit, for the few dollars it may bring. I'm just a housewife and mother now."

She painted and varnished, polished and scoured. She bought second-hand furniture for nearly nothing, and reupholstered it herself, with the aid of one woman, and the children. While they worked she told the children stories.

"This reminds me of what your Grandfather Beecher used to tell me about setting up 'housekeeping with his bride, Roxana. They were very, very poor—"

"Was Grandfather always poor, too, like us?" Freddy interrupted.

"Nearly always. Well, they had no parlor carpet, so this is what your Grandmother did. She took heavy sacks, and sewed them together very neatly, and tacked them on the floor. Then she painted the whole thing, and added a border and a center wreath of roses. It looked so grand that when a neighbor came calling, he just stood in the parlor door, and stared.

"'Come on in,' said your Grandmother. And the man said, 'I can't, without steppin' on it. Just think, Reverend Beecher—a carpet like this, and Heaven, too!'"

"Mama, why don't *you* paint roses on things?" cried Georgiana. And Harriet did—on chairs and cupboards.

"Moving is fun," declared Freddy. "I bet Harry and 'Liza wish they was here."

"You mean wish they *were* here!" corrected twin Hatty. "And so do I. Eliza and I have never been apart a single day in our whole lives before," she added wistfully.

Calvin and the other two children, Harry and Eliza, arrived in July, and soon after, another son was born to Harriet. They named him Charles Edward.

"He will take the place of little Samuel," said Calvin.

But Harriet could never be consoled for the loss of that baby lying in Lane Cemetery, so far away. She was glad, however, that one of her children was New-England born, and happy that the rest were safely out of that plague-spot, Cincinnati.

Here in the clean, pine-scented air of the Maine coast, she could breathe again—forget the humid heat, the rioting mobs, the taint of oppression and death on the Ohio border. After seventeen years, the exile had come home.

LIFE in Brunswick was the pleasantest the Stowes had ever known. In summer there was the ocean; the broken shore-line with long-jutting tongues of land, islands and coves where the children loved to fish, bathe and gather shells. Harriet lay on the beach, listening to the waves, and the wind in the pines, renewing her strength. She remembered that this was the ocean Byron had had in mind. She learned to cook and appreciate sea foods, and to know the parts of a ship.

In winter there was coasting right on Federal Street. Harriet had almost forgotten how wonderful a white win-

ter could be. She coasted and snowballed with the children, and romped with Rover, their clumsy Newfoundland puppy. Her cheeks grew rosy, and she looked and felt like a girl again.

There were many pleasant evenings with the Uphams and the Smyths. But all too often, the talk was of slavery. The Compromise Measure, with its new Fugitive Slave Laws, had passed, and already was making trouble. The papers were full of accounts of Negroes, both slave and free, being pursued by slave-catchers. Even quiet Professor Upham was excited.

"There will be bloodshed—real bloodshed—before this thing is settled," he predicted.

Harriet sat silent. She had come East to forget slavery.

But her brother Edward and his militant wife would not let her forget it. They were trying to convert her to Abolition. They invited her to Boston, to meet a saintly old freedman, Reverend Henson, whose sad experiences as a slave made Harriet's heart bleed. They wrote her long letters, describing the atrocities resulting from the Fugitive Slave Law in Boston. One of these letters from Mrs. Beecher ended, "Harriet, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something to make the whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is."

Harriet read the letter aloud to her family. Then she rose abruptly, crumpling the paper in her hand, and the look on her face frightened the children.

"I *will* write something!" Her voice was low and tense. "I will if I live!"

This was no light resolve for a woman in 1850. Politics and slavery were man's business; female agitators were few, and highly unpopular. She wouldn't dare sign her name. And what could her puny efforts amount to, compared with those of Garrison and Wendell Phillips and the Quaker poet, John G. Whittier? But she could try. It might at least ease her mind, so long burdened with this hatred of slavery . . .

The chief obstacle was, she had not the faintest idea of what to write . . . and it was time to feed the baby.

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THE WINTER was a busy one. Besides doing all her housework and tending the baby, Harriet painted pictures for the ladies of Brunswick, and opened a little school in her home, for her own and the neighbors' children. Every day she read Scott's novels aloud to her own brood, and at odd moments she wrote bits for the editors. Two of her longer pieces brought in a hundred dollars, and Harriet began to think that perhaps she could save the financial situation by writing woman stuff! It came so easily. Her pledge to write something about slavery was almost forgotten. She still had no ideas for that.

One January night, Harriet sat alone by her parlor stove, waiting for the overdue train that was to bring Henry Ward up from Boston where he had been lecturing. Outside the wind howled, dashing hard snow against the windows,

and making the branches of the elms groan under its fury. Storms always stimulated Harriet. They seemed to release some pent-up power within her.

It would be a rare treat to have her brother all to herself. Calvin was at Lane for the winter term, since they would not release him from his contract. Her husband was fond of Henry, but the young man's amazing success galled the poor Professor, whose unrewarded abilities were so much greater.

It was after midnight when Henry Ward struggled through the drifts, and sounded the knocker. He shook the snow from his rich, fur-trimmed cape and the wide Homburg hat he had adopted in Europe, and tossed back his dark, shoulder-length hair. He was indeed an impressive figure.

"Hattie, you're looking well—much better than last spring. I'll swear you don't look over twenty-five."

"Flatterer! I'm thirty-nine, and you know it, though sometimes I don't feel the half of it. How brave you are, coming up in all this weather."

"I simply had to come." His smile faded. "You're the only person I can talk to. Hattie, I'm a very unhappy man."

"But you have everything in the world to make you happy. What's the trouble?"

"It's Eunice. Life with her is—unbearable. My home is a dungeon! I don't feel as if I can go back to it."

Harriet tried not to show the shock she felt. "Of course you'll go back, Henry. To do otherwise would mean ruin. I'm sure you're exaggerating trifles."

"It's no trifle, being nagged and criticised and spied upon at every turn. Eunice reads all my mail—letters, bills, everything! And she's jealous of every woman in my parish. Can I help it if the ladies look to me for spiritual guidance, and write confidential notes, or ask me to call? It's my duty as a pastor to be kind to them."

"Perhaps so, but—"

"Then the bills—all extravagances, she calls them. Eunice is stingy, a veritable miser. She even raises a row about my florist bills. You know I keep my pulpit banked with flowers. They inspire me, and open the hearts of my congregation."

"Won't someone donate flowers?"

"Not the variety and quantity that I require. But I fool her sometimes. I bought two fine Turkish rugs for my study, and laid one on top of the other. She thinks there's only one, and even that nearly killed her." He laughed harshly, and began pacing the floor.

"Here's something else Eunice doesn't know about." He drew from his pocket a handful of gems—garnets, topazes, opals, and sapphires—and fondly displayed them so their colors gleamed richly in the lamplight. "I keep these with me, always. I call them my fadeless flowers."

Then, seeing the look of sad amazement on his sister's face, he replaced the stones in his pocket, and went on imploringly, "Oh, don't you understand? I *must* have beauty—beauty all around me, to make up for the lean years, for my loveless marriage! Even my children belong to Eunice. I must have something of my own!"

Harriet could find nothing to say. How much of all this was play-acting she did not know, but her heart was full of pity. She gently led him to a chair.

"Sit here by the fire. I'm going out to make us some coffee."

She bustled about the cold kitchen, thinking, "How much happier Calvin and I are, for all our obscure poverty, than Eunice and Henry! I wouldn't trade my dear husband and our children for all the money and fame in the whole world!"

After three cups of coffee Henry Ward felt more able to face life's problems, and it was not long before their conversation worked around to slavery.

"I've been thinking of opening Plymouth Church to Wendell Phillips for his Abolition lectures," Henry announced. "He's barred everywhere else in the city. Eunice doesn't approve, but I think I can risk it. The annual sale of pews brought in twelve thousand dollars. They were auctioned, like Barnum's concert tickets. It's the least I can do, since I can't come out openly for the Cause myself."

"Follow your own conscience, Henry. But are you really an Abolitionist at heart? Don't you still believe in gradual emancipation?"

"Well, yes and no. If we *could* have it—but the chances look very poor." His voice took on an oratorical tone. "My earnest desire is that slavery be destroyed by the manifest power of Christianity . . . that God may be honored, not Mammon, in the destruction of it."

"That's moderate enough to please almost everybody in New York," Harriet commented dryly. "But if you mean by that, that the good people of the South should free their slaves voluntarily, you're right. That's the way it should be. If their eyes were only open—Henry, I've been thinking I'd write something, to picture slavery as the curse it is. Do you think I should?"

"Yes, Hattie, go on and do it," said Henry, with an air of lordly patronage. "Write it, and I'll scatter it for you, thick as the leaves of Vallombrosa!"

"What *are* the leaves of Vallombrosa?" Harriet asked with a smile.

"I haven't the faintest idea, but it's a nice-sounding phrase. Or, if you want to write something now and then for my column in the *Independent*—unsigned, and not *too* strong, of course—"

"Thank you, Henry, but this would likely be fiction."

"Oh, fiction! That's of no importance. Hattie, I have another idea—a bit daring, perhaps, but I venture it would make people take notice. I would bring a slave into the church, and appeal to the congregation for money to buy her freedom. Other clergymen have been collecting ransom money, but this will be different! I'll find a beautiful quadroon, dress her in a flowing white robe, her long, black hair streaming down, her hands manacled. I'll place her on an auction block, and impersonate an auctioneer. I'll have the girl trained; on a certain cue, she'll fall moaning to her knees, raising her arms in supplication—music in the background, of course. That'll get 'em! They'll empty their

pockets, strip off their rings—it'll be the talk of the town. You've got to *show* people things, create a picture . . ."

Henry and Harriet talked till dawn, and parted with renewed courage for the tasks ahead, greater than either of them realized.

NOT LONG after that, Harriet had a vision.

She was sitting in the First Parish Church, listening with half-closed eyes to the soft music and words of the Communion ritual. Suddenly a scene appeared before her, as real as anything she had ever beheld on the earth. Three forms took shape—an old, ragged, white-haired slave, and two giant, brutal Negroes who were flogging him. Again and again the cruel whips descended on the old man's back. The blood gushed from his wounds, he staggered and fell, never to rise. His tortured face relaxed, his eyes lifted to Heaven, and his lips moved as if in prayer.

The vision faded, and Harriet slowly became aware of her surroundings, and the tears staining her cheeks. She wiped them away mechanically, caring little whether people had noticed. She was still in a trance of pity and sorrow for that dying slave. Only hours later could she marvel at the strangeness of this experience. Calvin often saw visions, but this was her first. Could it be that God was giving her an idea for that something about slavery?

After the midday meal, Harriet went to her room to write the scene down. There was no writing paper at hand, but she seized a piece of brown wrapping paper, smoothed it,

and began to write. The name of the old slave would be Uncle Tom; his persecutors, Sambo and Quimbo. Other details and dialog were quickly supplied by her imagination. Another character—Tom's old master—appears and tells him he has come to buy him back. But Uncle Tom answers that he is too late—the Lord has bought him, and is going to take him home to Heaven. But before he dies, Uncle Tom forgives his black torturers, who become repentant.

By the time she had finished, it was four o'clock, the hour for reading aloud to the children. Today, instead of Scott, she read what she had just written. The twins and Freddy shed tears, and thirteen-year-old Harry cried in a choked voice, "Mama, I believe slavery is the cruelest thing in the world!"

Georgiana began asking questions: Why had Uncle Tom left his home? Why was he being beaten? Harriet perceived that she had only the ending of a possible short story. It would take a lot more writing to lead up to it properly. She considered it while preparing supper and putting the little ones to bed.

No, she decided, it would be a waste of time. Any anti-slavery story she might write would be such a tiny contribution to the Cause. It might not sell at all. She must spend the little time and strength she had in writing what she knew would sell. They needed money so desperately for bedding, warm clothing, doctor bills, and Harry and the twins must soon be sent away to school. No, she must think first of all of her children. She put the brown paper away in her desk.

CALVIN returned in March, free of all obligations at Lane. Fortune was at last smiling on him, for he had had an offer of a better-paid position at Andover. He was still under contract at Bowdoin, but if the Stowes could manage to live on that pittance one more year, the future would be somewhat brighter.

Rummaging through the desk one day, the Professor came upon the piece of brown paper, and read in his wife's fine, flowing handwriting, of the death of Uncle Tom. He came to Harriet with the paper in his hand, and tears glistening on his plump cheeks.

"What is this?" he asked excitedly, and listened gravely to her story of the vision.

"It is excellent, my dear. A very touching scene. Why not build a story around it?"

"What would I do with such a story? Nobody wants fiction on controversial subjects. Mr. Bailey of the *Era* likes light, domestic sketches. Do you really think I should meddle with anything so far outside a woman's sphere?"

"Ordinarily I should say no," he pondered. "But in this case, I believe it was meant you should do something with it. It is the Lord's will."

So Harriet began planning her story. "I must show the best side of slavery, as well as the worst," she told herself. "I shall start in Kentucky, on a plantation like Brentwood. The kind master goes bankrupt, and Tom is sold down the river, where he falls into the hands of a brutal overseer . . . I've never known one, but brother Charley told me of a man he met on a boat, who showed his hard, horny fist, and

bragged, 'I got that from knockin' down niggers.' Yes, and I'll name him . . . Simon Legree."

Before committing anything to paper, Harriet sent off a note to Editor Bailey, describing her idea. "It will be longer than anything I have written—it may extend through three or four issues. I could have it ready in two or three weeks."

Mr. Bailey was willing to buy it, sight unseen, and enclosed a check for three hundred dollars!

Harriet was dazed. As she stared incredulously at the magic bit of paper, her thought was that Mr. Bailey had been moved by some charitable impulse. Nothing she had ever written had brought more than fifty dollars, so how could this dubious effort be worth so much more? She resolved to try to give the kind editor his money's worth—say, five or six instalments. She seized her pen, and began to write.

Poor Harriet! How little she suspected of what would happen to her humble story. It was to run, not five instalments, but forty; and the writing would consume a whole long, gruelling year.

THE OLD frame house on Federal Street was sheltering the most stupendous literary work of the century, but no one was aware of it in that summer of 1851. Lyman Beecher and Kate visited the Stowes. Lyman was too engrossed in editing his old sermons for publication to notice anything amiss. But Kate was worried.

"You're working too hard, Harriet. What is this thing?"

Harriet explained, adding, "Already there have been ten instalments, but ideas keep coming to me, and I can't seem to end it."

"My dear girl," cried Kate, disapprovingly. "You're writing a *novel*. You were only paid to write a short story. It's all very foolish. I can't understand your taking to incendiary literature."

"But it isn't meant to be incendiary," Harriet explained, earnestly. "It is aimed at the humane people of the South, for I do believe in their goodness. If I could bring them to feel half the horror of slavery that I feel, they would free their own slaves, and the two sections could be friends again."

"How can you expect to influence the South—you, a New England woman, writing for an anti-slavery paper?"

"I haven't always been in New England, and the *Era* is published in Washington. I'm trying so hard to be fair to the South. My very nicest characters I've made Southerners, who love the Negroes, and the very worst is a New Englander—Simon Legree. And I've poked fun at Yankee Miss Ophelia—she's rather like Aunt Esther. Don't you see? It isn't Abolition!"

"If it isn't, then who on earth is reading it?"

"Someone must be," said Harriet stubbornly. "Mr. Bailey has had lots of letters about it, and now he's begun putting it on the front page."

"Well, I don't understand that," responded Kate, "unless it's full of humor."

"It isn't. Oh, there's some fun in it, but on the whole it's

very somber. While I write, I often blur the pages with my tears. But it's a true picture of slavery as I see it, and foolish or not, I have to write it as it comes to me. I *have* to, Kate!" Her voice broke, and she buried her face in her hands.

"There now," said her sister, soothingly, "you're just nervous and tired. You're killing yourself for nothing, in my opinion. I shall see that you have some help here. And, while I don't often read fiction, I'll have a look at this story of yours."

Kate loved to manage other people's affairs. She hired a cook—a green Irish girl who had to be taught everything—and found a secretary for her father, who had counted on Hattie's helping him with his sermons. She read the story so far, and pronounced it powerful.

"The title is very odd, though. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or *Life Among the Lowly*. Not a word in it suggesting slavery."

"I know," replied Harriet tersely. "That's why I chose it."

"If you insist on writing a book," Kate persisted, "then you should have it published in book form. It's ridiculous to do all that work for three hundred dollars. Just leave the matter to me. Calvin knows no more than an unborn babe about the book business."

"He's had two books published, and is working on another," said Harriet defensively.

"And I've had eight, including our geography," Kate retorted. "I shall go to Boston, and speak to my publishers there."

Kate's publishers turned it down cold. An anti-slavery

novel? There had never been such a thing. Worse still, it might hurt their Southern business. Kate saw her plan was hopeless.

However, one of Harriet's unknown readers happened to be the wife of John P. Jewett, a small publisher of non-fiction in Boston. She urged her husband to take a chance on this new story, which she and many others were enjoying. In September he wrote Mrs. Stowe, proposing to bring out her story as soon as its serial run was finished. Harriet wrote back a prompt and grateful acceptance, and went on writing. She hoped it would be finished before Thanksgiving.

She was writing at all times and all places—the yard, the back steps, the parlor, the bedroom, the attic, but most often the kitchen table, so she could watch the cooking. There was no quiet, no hour free from interruption. The blundering Irish maid, Calvin with his futile puttering, Lyman Beecher and his secretary, Kate with her advice, the baby just learning to toddle, five children and their playmates and their dogs, all added up to bedlam. That weekly deadline was always looming just ahead. By October Harriet was ill, and missed an issue, to the great disappointment of her readers.

Lying in bed, she could think of nothing but her story. It obsessed her, crowding her brain with pictures crying to be put into words. It was no simple picture of slavery she was painting now with her swift pen, but a vast mural of many parts. Things half-forgotten, stories heard years before, people scarcely noticed, came back sharp and clear,

with new significance. The slave woman fleeing across the broken ice, the mother whose baby had been snatched from her arms and sold, the broken homes, the despairing cries of the hunted—all came back to her.

It was not all blood and tears. She had known happy Negroes. She smiled at memories of the Sunday-school class of little girls she had taught in Cincinnati. Celeste, a cunning black imp, with no head for catechism . . . she must go into the story as Topsy. Because an audience of children was always in her mind, Harriet created another child character—little Eva, who would love Topsy, and sit on Uncle Tom's knee.

The Stowe children listened eagerly each evening to what Mama had written that day. When little Eva died, they all wept.

"Mama, why did you let Eva die?" they implored.

"It had to be. God wanted her," answered Harriet, and thinking of her own dead baby, fell into a storm of weeping, and was so exhausted she remained in bed two days.

The kindly but absent-minded Calvin at last became aware of his wife's struggles. "How is it coming?" he asked. "Aren't you about finished with the plaguy thing?"

"I'm afraid not. I just can't stop it." She sighed. "I wish I could!"

Her husband peered at her anxiously over his spectacles. It occurred to him she was having a pretty hard time.

"My dear, you need a quiet place to write. Why not use my office in Appleton Hall? I use it very little, and while I'm at Andover for the winter term, it can be all yours."

"Thank you, Calvin. That would be heavenly. But I can't leave the children alone with Nora, and what about my little school?"

"We'll find a governess for them, and let her carry on the school alone, for her pay. Then you'll be free from all care."

"Hardly that," smiled Harriet. "But it will help immensely."

So Harriet invaded the masculine precincts of Bowdoin campus, and the students grew accustomed to seeing their professor's wife slipping in and out of Appleton Hall, like a little ghost in hoop-skirts, with a far-away look in her deep violet eyes.

Mr. Jewett became alarmed at the length of the serial. If it ran into two volumes, he could not afford to publish it. He begged Mrs. Stowe to bring it quickly to an end, and the weary Harriet would have liked nothing better. Even Mr. Bailey had had enough, and printed a notice informing his subscribers that Mrs. Stowe would add just a few paragraphs, telling how it all turned out. But the public replied with such a flood of protesting letters that he was forced to reverse his decision. Harriet sighed and wrote on.

Her hope of seeing the work in book form faded with each added page, but she could not stem the tide. The story seemed to write itself. The theme—or was it some unseen Power?—drove her relentlessly.

She would rise stiffly from her desk, relax her cramped right arm, and lean her aching head against the cool windowpane. The campus scene swam in a mist before her

eyes. ". . . Oh, God, I am Thy feeble instrument . . . Give me strength for one more chapter . . . one more page . . . Give me strength, dear God . . . and the power to endure to the end!"

Harriet wrote on.

XX

MRS. JEWETT spoke to her husband for the tenth time. "John, you've simply got to publish *Uncle Tom's Cabin*!"

"Do you want to be a pauper's wife?" protested Mr. Jewett. "It would run into two good-sized volumes. If it didn't have a tremendous sale, I'd be ruined."

"It *will* sell. Everybody's reading it in the *Era*. They pass the paper around until it's worn out. I tell you, this is the chance of a lifetime. But even if it doesn't make money, it can be our contribution to the anti-slavery cause. Please, John!"

"We'll see. Maybe I could get the Stowes to put up half the money. If not, I'll have to take most of the proceeds."

In March, 1852, Calvin Stowe came to Boston to sign the contracts. He must choose between sharing equally with Jewett the printing costs, and profits, if any, or taking ten percent of all proceeds. This was a dilemma. Calvin thought ten percent was too little, but he had no money to put into the enterprise.

He went to his Congressman friend, Hon. Philip Gree-

ley, and asked his advice. The gentleman had never read a line of the story, but he replied without hesitation, "An anti-slavery novel? And by a woman? You shouldn't gamble a penny on such a thing. You're lucky to get it published at all. Tell your wife she can be thankful if she gets enough out of it to buy herself a new dress."

Harriet was well pleased with the arrangement. "I do hope, though, it will be enough for a *silk* dress. I'm the only faculty wife here who doesn't have one."

At long last the story was finished. With a prayer of thanksgiving, Harriet laid aside her pen, and felt as if she would never, never take it up again. She had made her humble contribution to the Cause, written in her heart's blood, compounded of all the sorrows she had ever known. Now, it seemed, only a miracle could give it real value, and she did not believe in modern miracles.

But down in Boston a strange thing was happening. Without publicity or advance reviews, booksellers' orders for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were already pouring in. The presses began to roll, but in two days the whole first edition of five thousand copies was sold out, and orders piling sky-high. The frantic Mr. Jewett rushed out a second printing, a third, and a fourth. Three weeks, and they, too, were sold. There had never been anything like it in the history of publishing!

The two-volume novel totalled six hundred and twenty-four pages, and was available in three bindings, including a de luxe gift edition bound in lavender cloth and richly adorned front and back with gilt.

The Hon. Philip Greeley was given a copy, in return for his wise (?) advice about the contract. He took it to read on the journey back to Washington. But at Springfield he left the train, and took a hotel room. He could not stop reading, and weeping! What a spectacle for his fellow-travellers! A strong man, and a Congressman at that, shedding tears in public over a book!

All over the land, other people neglected their duties to read and cry over this new and amazing book. Up in Brunswick, Calvin sat down with pencil and paper to figure the amount of the royalties so far, even at ten percent. The result made him dizzy. And no end was in sight.

A Boston paper, reporting Mr. Jewett's activities, stated that three presses were running twenty-four hours a day, six days a week, a hundred bookbinders were at work, and three mills could scarcely supply the paper needed. In eight weeks fifty thousand copies had been made and sold!

As for the bewildered Harriet, she hired a housekeeper, and took to her bed. She needed to rest, to think, to realize her good fortune. The days of grinding poverty were over. But she was still concerned over the influence her book would wield. Was it reaching the South? Would the good people there understand it as a hand held out in peace and friendship? She prayed daily that they would.

A new thought struck her. "Calvin," she cried, "what about England? Will the British ever see my book?"

"Ah, I never once thought of that!" groaned the Professor. "We should have taken out a British copyright. Maybe we can yet. I'll see."

What he learned was not encouraging. "Foreign copyright laws are very strange, where they exist at all," he reported. "One would have to go to England, and handle the matter in person."

"But I want the British to read my novel, for a special reason. There is a rumor that the pro-slavery faction is trying to extend the Fugitive Slave Laws into Canada. Think what that would mean; no refuge left for the Negroes. The British are liberty-loving. They must not let that thing happen!"

"I'll tell you what we might do," suggested Calvin. "Send copies to some of England's liberal leaders and anti-slavery men. And why not send one of the beautiful lavender copies to Queen Victoria herself?"

"Me? A little Maine housewife? I'd never be so presumptuous."

But she did, addressing the book, however, to the Prince Consort. She wrote notes and sent gift copies to a dozen of England's great, hoping humbly that they might perhaps write letters in return. It seemed like a dream of her childhood coming true.

Poor Harriet! Even as she was happily mailing these offerings, a pirate publisher in London was turning out a cheap edition of *Uncle Tom* which swept the British Isles like wildfire. For all these sales, Harriet never received a penny.

In April the reviewers began to be heard. "Spread it round the world!" commanded one. "Let all men read it." Others joined the chorus of praise. Harriet had letters of congratulation from Henry Longfellow and John G. Whit-

tier. The latter wrote a poem about little Eva. No authoress could stay in bed with these incredible happenings occurring every day. She floated through her housekeeping tasks on a rosy cloud. Surely the fairy godmother had waved her magic wand.

IN MAY Harriet resolved to take a trip, although it was not solely for pleasure. The editor of the *Independent* had urged her to come to New York for a conference. What he wanted she could not imagine.

"I shall stop off at Boston to see Ned," she said, "and at Hartford, of course. I may go to New Haven, too; Mary Dutton will help me buy some clothes."

"By all means," urged Calvin. "Get a lot of 'em!"

"Oh, no. I only want to look respectable. But I *will* buy that silk dress!"

In Boston, Edward Beecher was pleased, of course, about his sister's success. It was only a novel, but it had Christian purpose. However, he felt it his duty to warn her, "Take care, Hattie, that all this praise and adulation doesn't turn your head, and work harm to your Christian character."

Harriet smiled strangely. "Never fear, Edward. I have no cause for pride. I didn't write the story."

Edward was startled. "You didn't? Is it true, then, what people are saying—that Henry Ward wrote it, and hid behind your name?"

"They're saying *that*? No, it wasn't Henry Ward."

"Then who on earth was it?"

"No one on earth, Edward. My hand set it down, but—I think God wrote it!"

At New Haven Mary Dutton, married at last, hailed her friend with ecstatic cries, and took her shopping at once.

"We mustn't be too extravagant," protested Harriet. "After all, I'm only a small-town housewife of forty, and it's no use trying to look like a Paris model—however they look."

Mary did her best, and was not displeased with the results. The silk dress Harriet chose was a simple dark green moire taffeta, fastened close about the throat with the inevitable touch of white, and a cameo brooch. Bell-shaped sleeves revealed a fall of white ruffles at the wrist.

"You must have one of the new hoop-petticoats," insisted Mary. "They are bigger, and stand out farther in back. With that underneath, the dress will look really elegant!"

Harriet took this advice. A bonnet and silk mitts to match the dress, and a lovely Paisley shawl, completed the costume.

Still Mary was not satisfied until she had taken Harriet to the hairdresser's. The new coiffure must be simple, Harriet insisted. No ringlets at the temples. No ornaments. The result was a compromise: a narrow filigree band across the top of the center parting; soft waves ending in a mass of short curls behind. This swept-back style gave Harriet's lean, alert face a very distinguished look, bringing out the beauty of her strong, classic features.

As the train rattled into Hartford, Harriet brushed off the accumulation of cinders, and smiled in memory of her

thirteen-year-old self, brushing off the dust, and gazing awe-struck at the same city sights from the back seat of the old Beecher carryall. She had come a long road since then.

Georgiana May Sykes was not surprised at her friend's phenomenal rise to fame. "I always knew you had something others lack," she said. "I'm glad the world has found it out at last."

"Do you remember, Georgy, how we used to sit on the river bank, planning our futures? And the house I promised I'd build there, when I was rich and famous?"

"Are you actually thinking of building there?" asked Georgiana. "Our spot is still vacant, but the town has grown so, it isn't in the country any more."

"If I did, I couldn't live in it now," replied Harriet. "We are moving to Andover next year."

"How does the Professor like being a celebrity's husband?"

"Pleased as Punch. He has a right to be, for without his urging, I should likely never have written my book. But he has no thought of giving up his work, and the new position at Andover carries a lot of prestige. For my part, I'd much rather stay in Brunswick, but I wouldn't dream of suggesting it."

The visit to Brooklyn was very different from the one two years before. Now Eunice was all smiles and fluttering cordiality. She introduced Harriet to the very best people, basking in the reflected glory, and building up her own social position. For her guest was now a celebrity, and everyone was anxious to meet her.

Far more pleasing to Harriet than all this social whirl was the unexpected chance to hear Jenny Lind's concert. The seats were all sold, but the already magical name, "Mrs. Stowe," brought forth two tickets. Harriet was so grateful for this amazing favor, and so thrilled by the music of the Swedish Nightingale, that she at once wrote her a warm note of thanks. And when she received a reply, praising *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet was completely overwhelmed. Not just an autograph, but a whole letter from the hand of the great and lovely singing star! This bit of paper was Harriet's choicest treasure. It never occurred to her that Miss Lind might also be cherishing *her* autograph, as many other persons were soon to do.

Eunice was, of course, a little jealous, but Henry was more so, and his wife took delight in goading him.

"What do you think of my book, Henry Ward?" asked Harriet, anxious for his opinion. "I sent you a copy six weeks ago, but you've never written me."

As Henry hesitated, Eunice spoke up. "He hasn't read it, Harriet. I keep it on the parlor table in plain sight, but he's never looked inside of it."

"Well, I'm a busy man. I read some of the reviews. Very glowing they were, too. But years ago I made it a rule never to read anything written by a member of the family."

"I read most of it," said Eunice. "It's over-emotional for my taste. I know people of a certain type enjoy a good cry, but I don't. Now *my* book will be very different."

"Are you writing a book, Eunice?"

"Yes, I'm going to picture life in Indiana as it really is—

and I should know, after nine ghastly years of it. The things I can tell about some of those people! My publisher is most enthusiastic."

Henry Ward glowered. "I told him if he was fool enough to publish the thing just because my wife wrote it, to go ahead, but I wouldn't be held responsible. Anybody named Beecher can break into print, even with fiction."

"Pay no heed to him, Harriet. He'll be writing a novel himself before long. I've seen the notes for it in his desk."

"What if I do?" snapped Henry, adding, with a flash of his old boyish humor, "It might at least prove I didn't write Hattie's, as some people seem to think. But seriously, I've a much better idea. I'm going to bring out a hymn book, different from all others. The words will be printed alongside of the music."

"Why not have brother Charles do the music?" suggested Harriet.

This was eventually done, and Henry made a great deal of money from his *Plymouth Hymnal*, while Charles, who had done most of the work, received only a small fee, and an acknowledgement.

The little authoress at last tore herself away from the round of teas, dinners, and receptions in her honor, to present herself, somewhat timidly, at the *Independent* office. An hour later she emerged as the first woman columnist of America. She had promised to write weekly articles on topics of her own choice, to occupy the best spot—page one, column one—now being filled by Henry Ward Beecher.

This was a bitter dose for poor Henry. Like many suc-

cessful people, he longed to excel in more than one field, and he fancied himself as a journalist. But he swallowed his chagrin at being crowded out of his spot by sister Hattie, and remarked to her with forced casualness, "Do me a little favor, won't you? I've been meaning to pen an attack on our rival paper, the *Observer*—have the piece half written, in fact. I know you'll be too busy to write anything this week, so let's finish that up, and send it in under your name."

Harriet agreed, though she had no quarrel with the *Observer*. It seemed the least she could do, under the circumstances, to please her brother. But her readers were unpleasantly surprised by this blast. It was so unlike what they had expected from the pen of dear Mrs. Stowe.

The peace thus maintained with Henry suffered a worse blow that eventful week. Among the throng who came to meet Harriet was a theatrical manager, requesting permission to dramatize her book. Dramatic rights were unknown then, and asking an author's permission only a courteous gesture. Harriet, who had not foreseen any such development, was nonplussed. But the gentleman was very persuasive. He went on to describe the actors, and how he would portray that great scene of Eliza crossing the ice—real bloodhounds, too. But she had already decided. If it would mean a larger audience for her story . . . She told him to go ahead, with her blessing.

To Henry Ward this was simply the last straw. He blew up.

"You will drag the name of Beecher in the mire!" he

shouted. "How can you stoop to traffic with the purveyors of evil?"

"But Henry, my story isn't evil," replied Harriet in hurt tones.

"The theatre is the arch-minister of vice, and the gateway to iniquity!" thundered Henry, his face very red.

"Have you ever been to a theatre?" asked his sister, coolly.

"Why—well, yes. But only in the interests of moral uplift. Hattie, even though you've lost all shame for yourself, will you think of *me*, of *my* position? For years I've been launching attacks against that—that cesspool of corruption, that—"

Harriet had endured all she could. Her eyes flashed.

"*Your* position? Well, it's *my* book! Nobody knows what it cost me to write it—nobody cares. You won't even read it. If its message can reach more people through the theatre, then the theatre's *good*! I'm old enough to know my own mind, and I'll do as I like!"

Henry Ward stamped out, slamming the door savagely, and Harriet was instantly contrite.

"He needs taking down a notch," said Eunice. "He has a secret hankering for the theatre himself. What are those precious 'slave auctions' of his but play-acting? He's just sulky because you've outdone him again."

"Eunice, am I really disgracing the family name?"

"No. Henry doesn't mean half he says. All that Puritan cant was out of your father's old sermons. He'll soon get over this tantrum."

Apparently he did, but things were never quite the same. Harriet did not believe he could possibly be jealous of her, but the incident marred her happiness. Already success was coming between her and those she loved.

It was also bringing new responsibilities—new demands upon her time and her fast-dwindling funds. She subscribed generously to Kate's current project—a woman's college in the six-year-old city of Milwaukee. She contributed toward the ransom of a slave family, and herself raised the required fund of over three thousand dollars by soliciting church groups and women's clubs. She had a talent for organization, and loved to play the role of Lady Bountiful. If only she had had enough money, she would have ransomed all the slaves below the Mason-Dixon line.

In June Harriet returned to Brunswick, taking sister Isabella to help with the mountain of mail accumulated during her absence. The stately brunette set to work at once, opening letters and sorting them into three piles—congratulations, invitations, and begging letters. She was also to make a scrapbook of clippings about *Uncle Tom*.

But there was an alarming new development. The book which had appeared at first to both North and South as an absorbing piece of fiction was suddenly realized for what it was—powerful propaganda, anti-slavery dynamite. Newspapers that supported Northern interests in cotton began calling the book a pack of lies. The Abolitionist press replied, and a great wordy battle was raging. The book was banned in the South. Citizens wrote abusive letters to the author. She was being regarded as a dangerous woman.

Harriet herself was blissfully unaware of all this. She had ceased to read her press notices, unless someone brought them to her attention. But Bella read with growing alarm. She was forced to make a fourth pile of letters—letters of abuse! She had a secret conference with Calvin, and asked him what to do.

"We must keep this from Harriet as long as we can," said the distraught Professor. "Maybe it will soon blow over. I suspect it's a plot hatched by the Slaveholders' Association—drat their plaguy hides! Put all the adverse material out of her sight, Bella, and the begging letters, too. I want to have some money left for the children's education."

But the secret could not be kept long. It had to come out. However, Harriet's reaction was not what her family had expected.

"So I'm a brimstone Abolitionist now, am I?" she said grimly. "That means I have lost the South. Instead of building friendship, my book will only create more strife."

She cared little about the attacks on her character—no one who knew her would believe them, anyway. But it was maddening to have the truth of her novel questioned. Had not every incident been based on fact? She could prove it.

"I will, too!" she cried with sudden resolve. "I'll collect data—legal documents, testimonies, reports of trials—and make a supplement for the book. I'll call it *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin!*"

"That isn't necessary," argued Calvin. "Fiction needs no documentary proofs. The pro-slavery factions know it's true

in spirit, and they're trying to lessen its influence, by fair means and foul."

"They've forced me into a fight," said the intrepid daughter of Lyman Beecher. "Very well, I'll give it to them!" And she began to assemble her data.

It was no use for her enemies to contend that slaves were never flogged to death; no use their denying that handbills offering rewards for runaways ever contained a dead-or-alive clause. There was ample testimony. But the mass of evidence was so great that it would take months to prepare the *Key*.

Worse than the labor involved was the effect upon Harriet's nerves. In reading proofs of cruelty and injustice, she suffered anew all the pain and horror with which such realities always filled her. It was worse than writing the novel, for now there was none of the creative fire to buoy her up.

One day the usually calm Isabella came rushing in with a letter.

"Here's something to divert your mind," she cried. "An invitation from the Anti-slavery Society of Glasgow, to make a personal appearance tour of Scotland!"

The Professor was as excited as a boy. "Just think, Harriet! We can do the British Isles, then Germany and France! It's what you've always dreamed of!"

"Could we, Calvin?" breathed Harriet. "But no, it would mean speeches and responses, and I couldn't utter a word in public."

"That's not expected of a lady, especially when she has

a perfectly competent husband to speak for her. Of course we'll accept the invitation. When do we start?"

Harriet sat lost in reverie. Scotland, the land of Scott's stories and ballads . . . The London of Dickens . . . the Paris of George Sand . . . a long-cherished dream coming true . . . She sighed deeply, and turned back to her document-laden desk.

"It will have to wait. Now, I must finish the *Key*."

XXI

WITHOUT the promised aid of Henry Ward, without effort on Harriet's part, her leaves sped on across the world as if driven by a mighty wind. Before the year was out, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had been translated into nine languages, including Russian and Finnish. Rich and poor, noble and tradesman, all read and wept over it. In an era of fast-growing democratic feeling, even those who knew nothing of the American slave system were held by this graphic portrayal of human suffering, and the wrongs of the common man.

The book had peculiar power. No one reading it could judge it calmly. They either revered it next to Shakespeare and the Bible, or they indignantly pronounced it trash. In Europe the latter were a small minority. While admitting its literary faults, George Sand declared it a work of genius—far above mere literary talent. But no matter what the critics said, the readers took the story to their hearts.

Other writers hastened to imitate or to answer *Uncle Tom*, which had become a world best-seller. Dozens of songs were written about the characters. Many plays based on the story began to appear in both England and America. Commercial products were named after it.

In America *Uncle Tom* had greater implications. Jewett, with Abolition zeal, had presented copies to all members of Congress. Controversies over the book and slavery issues waxed furious on the floor of the Senate. In spite of the Southern ban on the novel, orders were still being shipped below the line, but woe to the bookseller who was caught handling the detested thing. The ill-feeling engendered by the book was growing daily. It would soon seriously affect American relations with England, and menace the Union itself.

Harriet, laboring over the *Key*, was not aware of these world events. She did not know how many copies of her book had sold, nor what had been the amount of her latest royalty check. Money, represented by a row of figures, meant nothing to her, except that she needn't worry any more. When she thought of anything beyond the nerve-racking task at hand, it was of the wonderful trip to Scotland.

Brother Charles was going as her secretary. He was almost as dear to her as Henry Ward, and more congenial, now that the rift had come between her and Henry. Artistic, music-loving Charles would be useful, too. During his years in New Orleans, he had learned to speak French very well.

Sarah Beecher, who was George's widow, and a woman

of inherited wealth, was joining the party, along with her brother and young son, George Jr., who had artistic ambitions. With Calvin, this would make a party of six—just the number to fill a first-class compartment on the European trains, as they later learned.

On March 29, 1853, Harriet put the *Key* manuscript in the mailbox, and the next day the party embarked for Liverpool on the steamer *Niagara*. Harriet had brought all sorts of books and fancy work to while away the eleven or more days at sea.

"I mean to loll on deck the whole time, and just rest," she told the others. "I want to be fresh as a daisy when we reach port."

"I hope you can, my dear," said Calvin, who had made the trip before, "but this may not prove to be like sailing down the Ohio."

The first two days were smooth and pleasant. Harriet and Charles enjoyed many long talks. Charles was very proud of her, and happy that he had been able to furnish material for her great novel.

"You have many contacts in the South," she said. "Tell me, what is the feeling down there now about my book, and me?"

"I dislike to say it, Sis, but they hate you like poison. Your name is something to frighten little children with. Of course most of them know nothing of you or the book, except through hearsay."

Harriet sighed. "It has turned out so differently from what I had hoped and planned."

"The plans of the Beechers often go awry, it seems," smiled Charles ruefully. "There was Father's great mission for winning the West, and my own plan to live in the South—"

"Surely you'll go back there some day?"

"I'm afraid not. I'd find no peace there now—partly because I'm your brother, and partly because they're making ready for war."

"You mean—they'll fight to keep their slaves?"

"No, slavery is only an indirect cause. If war comes, it will be over secession."

"Oh, let's not talk of it. Let's be happy while we can. Now we're on a glorious holiday."

Holiday or no, the sea grew very rough, and nearly everyone was seasick, especially Harriet. "Life on shipboard is not at all—fragrant," she gasped, smiling wanly from her berth. She was wretchedly ill for a whole week, and did not go on deck again until the Irish coast was sighted. Then she made a sketch of Kinsdale Head to send to her father. For it was there that the ill-fated *Albion* had gone down thirty-one years before, bearing Kate's fiancé to his death.

Sarah Beecher was alarmed about Harriet's health.

"Calvin," she said, "we must stop over a few days in Liverpool, until Harriet recovers. She is in no condition to meet people."

"By all means," replied Calvin. "We'll find a quiet hotel, and let no one know we're here."

But a young man who had come aboard with the customs

officer now sought out the Stowe party, and to their great surprise, explained that they were expected at the home of his uncle, John Cropper. The name meant nothing to the travellers, but they were grateful.

It was Sunday morning, and Harriet, observing the crowd at the dock, said, "There must be few church-goers in Liverpool."

"Probably the arrival of a liner from America is a big event," answered Charles.

When they stepped ashore, the crowd was so dense a path had to be cleared. Only then did Harriet realize, with a shock, that these people were there to see *her*! There was a reverent silence as she walked through the lane under the eyes of her British worshippers. The men removed their hats, the women bowed and smiled. Harriet was frightened.

"What am I supposed to do?" she whispered frantically to her escort.

"Merely bow and smile. They're satisfied just to look at you."

Poor Harriet, dizzy and pale from her illness, felt that she could not be much to look at! But, seated in the carriage, she regained her composure enough to ask, "Surely all these people haven't read my book."

"A great many have," responded her host. "They are all familiar with your name, and honor you as the friend and champion of the working class."

The Croppers were Liverpool's wealthiest family, and lived in a fine residential park. Harriet was not too ill to admire the bright green lawns and hedges gay with April

flowers. The house interior was even more charming, and Harriet's bedchamber the loveliest she had ever seen. There were vases of flowers, and a cheery coal fire burned in the grate. The bed looked most inviting to the weary little traveller, but it was time to dress for dinner.

This was a quiet meal, with only the family there, but soon after the Croppers' daughter-in-law dropped in to invite the Stowes to breakfast next morning.

Harriet spent a wakeful night. She could still feel the rolling of that ship. But she bounced out of bed at day-break to see her first English robin—so different from his American cousin. She was sketching a holly tree outside the window when Calvin bustled in to remind her of the breakfast.

"Oh, dear me!" she cried. "I'd almost forgotten. Now what should I wear, I wonder?"

Believing that they were only going to share muffins and a plate of sausages with a neighbor, Harriet donned a sprigged cotton challis and a lace morning cap. That seemed proper enough. But when they arrived, Harriet was dismayed to see an assemblage of forty of Liverpool's first families, the ladies all attired in silken afternoon gowns, and wearing bonnets! Harriet's was the only morning cap there.

Never had she been so embarrassed; but she hoped the guests would take her garb as an eccentric American custom, and tried valiantly to appear at ease.

The meal over, the clergyman gave a formal address of welcome, to which Professor Stowe responded in his wife's

name. Harriet heaved a sigh. Now surely she could leave, take off these terrible clothes, and go to bed. But no, there was yet another ceremony.

The children of the charity school supported by the Croppers were waiting on the lawn to greet Mrs. Beecher-Stowe, as the British always called her. The whole company filed out behind Harriet, and listened while the children, all neat and clean, piped forth a song written especially for this great occasion.

Harriet was touched by the sight of these pathetic waifs—England's underprivileged—doomed from birth to a life of toil in unhealthy factories, sweatshops, and dark mines, sixteen hours a day, for barely enough to keep bread in their mouths. She reflected sadly that many a little slave, laboring in the sun of Kentucky or Tennessee, was far better off.

Next day Harriet felt equal to some sight-seeing. They drove through the country, visited cottages, and everywhere found people who had read and loved *Uncle Tom*. Villagers ran from their shops to smile and wave, and Harriet tried to smile and bow as a real celebrity should. But Calvin and Charles were kept busy nudging her on either side, to remind her of her duties in this respect.

"I just can't remember they're waving at me," she complained, as she hastened to flutter her handkerchief. "I've no time to look at anything, either."

That night they attended a private party, and the hostess came to Harriet with an unusual request.

"Would you be good enough to come out and greet my

servants?" she asked. "They are all waiting, and will be so disappointed if you don't. So many of them have enjoyed your book, too."

Harriet went, gladly. She liked British servants; they had so much dignity and self-respect.

Her only formal public appearance in Liverpool was The Presentation—of what she did not know. It proved to be a handsome purse containing thirty gold sovereigns—the result of several months' penny contributions to the Negroes' Friends Society. Harriet received the heavy purse and bowed, while Calvin expressed thanks.

That afternoon they boarded the train for Scotland. Crowds cheered them at the station. The compartment was filled with flowers. Then the door banged shut, and they were off on the greatest triumphal tour ever made by an American.

"Well! A fine, restful three days that turned out to be!" said Sarah ironically.

"And that was only Liverpool, where they supposedly didn't know we were coming," laughed Charles. "What will it be in Glasgow?"

Harriet leaned back against the hard cushions and closed her eyes. Who would ever have thought fame would be like this? But she had little time to think about fame or fatigue, for historic spots were beginning to glide past the windows. There was no one to explain things, but Calvin kept his finger in the guidebook, and bounced from one side of the car to the other, determined to miss nothing.

"Look! There's Carlisle!"

"Oh, that must be the Carlisle of Scott's ballad, in *Lay of the Last Minstrel*!" cried Harriet, forgetting she was ever tired.

*"It was an English laydie bright
Where sun shines fair on Carlisle wall—"*

"Go on, Hattie, and give us the rest of it," said Charles. "You used to know all those ballads, back in Litchfield."

She still did. When she had finished, and it was too dark to watch for castles, the travellers joined in singing all the Scotch songs they knew.

The telegraph had announced their arrival, and at every stop, eager crowds were outside, calling for Mrs. Stowe. Harriet leaned far out the window to shake hands with those nearest, while the rest shouted, "Ye're welcome tae Scotland!"

It was after midnight when they reached Glasgow, and were escorted to their hotel. A great stack of mail awaited them—gifts of all sorts, and invitations galore. Charles worked all next day disposing of them.

The Lord Provost offered to drive the Stowe party out to view the city—actually not so much to show the city to the Stowes, as to show the Stowes to the city. It was nothing short of a parade. There were three carriages, and the route they would take had been published in the papers, a thing never done except for royalty. So crowds cheered them all along the way.

Next day Harriet was so ill the physician ordered her to bed, and denied all visitors. But there was a tea party

planned for her that evening, and she simply *had* to attend. A tea party sounded like a cozy little affair, not too taxing. However, it was held in the City Hall, with two thousand persons present. The Stowes were seated alone on a high gallery, where the crowd might feast their eyes upon this new divinity, and wonder what noble thoughts were inspiring that far-off look in the violet eyes.

They would have been surprised to know that Harriet was thinking of how to describe this scene in a letter to her children, her mind full of whimsicalities: "I wonder how large a teapot was needed to brew two thousand cups of tea? Did Mother Scotland count into it two thousand spoonfuls of tea leaves, and then one for the pot . . . ?"

Next evening there was another tea party, equally large. It was really for those who did not want to pay the high price asked for the first night's tickets, and was called a "workingman's *soirée*." Taking his cue from this, Calvin for once relaxed his oratorical dignity, and sounded the democratic note. He poked gentle fun at coronets and titles, and told humorously of his boyhood labors in the Natick paper mills. He made a great hit, and Harriet was very proud of him.

More sight-seeing followed—country drives, and sails on the Clyde. There was another penny offering to receive, and then on they went to Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. The routine was the same everywhere, the cheers as lusty. The Scotch people were most hospitable and generous, but Harriet was pained to see so many ragged, forlorn children in the streets.

At last the fanfare was over, and the party could retire from the public gaze for a time. Harriet, now recovered and full of energy, had plans of her own.

"I refuse to leave Scotland until I've made my pilgrimage to Scott's grave, and his home, Abbotsford, and Melrose Abbey that he loved so much," she declared.

She had her way, and paid homage to Sir Walter Scott in every way she knew. Although the weather was foul, she tramped through the wet grounds of the estate at Abbotsford. She inspected every inch of the rambling old house. She translated the Latin inscription on the grave of Scott's favorite hound. She stood by Scott's tomb, and plucked a sprig of ivy as a keepsake.

It was still raining when she and Sarah went with a guide to see the ruins of Melrose Abbey. Harriet insisted on climbing the shattered, winding staircase, but it was late, and Sarah dragged her back to the inn for supper.

"I've seen enough moldy ruins for one day," declared her sister-in-law, "and so have you. We'll have something to eat, and go to bed early."

But after supper the clouds showed signs of lifting, and Harriet exclaimed, "Good! We'll see the Abbey by moonlight, after all."

Sarah argued and pleaded in vain. Harriet declared stubbornly, "I came here to see Melrose Abbey by moonlight, as Scott described it, and I mean to walk the whole figure while I'm about it. Go to bed if you like, Sarah. The guide will take me."

But the devoted Sarah would not desert her sister-in-

law. It was nearly twelve when the moon peered through a rift in the clouds, touching the ivy-clad walls with a dim, ghostly light.

"The place is haunted, you know," their guide warned.

The clock in the village tower tolled midnight. As the last stroke died away, a bit of loose stone rattled down the walls and fell at their feet. There were weird rustlings in the vines overhead, and an unearthly, harsh cry rent the stillness.

Sarah screamed faintly, and clutched Harriet's arm.

There was a beating of wings, and two birds flew out of the ruins, to disappear in the night.

"Only a pair of rooks," explained the guide.

"Well," scolded Sarah. "I hope now you're satisfied to go to bed like a sensible girl."

But Harriet had had her way. Although she was cold and wet and tired, her heart was warm with the knowledge that she had paid full homage to the memory of Sir Walter Scott.

"This man," she thought, "was the world's greatest storyteller. He made Scottish history and romance live. His writings have enchanted every foot of his beloved country. And what have I done? Written one book that stirs up hatreds, and tears my poor country apart. Yet I am the idol of the fickle crowd. In all his life Scott never was given such acclaim. I don't deserve it. This hysteria will soon pass, and I will be forgotten, while Scott's name will live forever. Time is the great balance-wheel of justice."

X X I I

NOW it was Ho, for Merrie England!

While Charles and the Stowes visited Shakespeare's shrine at Stratford, Sarah went on to London to find living quarters. She chose a place near a relative—Rose Cottage, Walworth, in a remote eastern suburb. Harriet called it a "retreat," but nevertheless she was soon besieged by callers.

No sooner, in fact, had she stepped from the London train than she was told to hasten and dress, for she was to be a special dinner guest of the Lord Mayor.

"What?" gasped Harriet. "The Lord Mayor of London, that I used to read about in *Dick Whittington and His Cat*?"

It was his annual official dinner, but the Mayor thought himself lucky in thus fêting the famous lady before anyone else had even seen her. Harriet was seated opposite London's own literary lion, the dynamic Mr. Charles Dickens, who felt somewhat miffed at being crowded out of the spotlight. They exchanged pleasantries, however, and he and Mrs. Dickens promised to call at Rose Cottage.

This dinner proved a tremendous entry into London society. It made headlines, and the very next morning Harriet had a caller, the American Mrs. Follen, now a London socialite. She at once appointed herself Harriet's adviser.

"My dear, what an unfashionable neighborhood!" she exclaimed, when she saw Rose Cottage. "Everybody who is anybody lives in the West End."

"I like it here," replied Harriet firmly. "It has a rustic charm. Look at that lovely meadow, with the lambs playing. I mean to go there and pick cowslips and buttercups."

But Harriet had no time for picking English wildflowers. London society was greeting her with open arms.

The first important function was a "levee" given for her by the Duchess of Sutherland at Stafford House, across the park from Buckingham Palace. Harriet had met so few of the nobility, she was still confused as to when to say "Your Ladyship," and when "Your Grace." Calvin was no wiser, so it was with some uneasiness that the Stowes presented themselves at the splendid mansion.

The door was opened by two footmen in Highland costume. The visitors entered a great hallway, empty except for two more footmen in satin knee breeches and powdered wigs. Trying not to stare, the two timorous guests followed one of these flunkies to a doorway, where he paused and announced their names in grandiose style. With great dignity the Stowes passed through the door, expecting to find a throng of waiting people. The room was empty—except for another pair of footmen! This strange ceremony of being announced to empty space was repeated at another passageway, another room, and another. To Harriet it seemed like some fantastic dream.

"Can it be we've mistaken the day, or the hour?" she whispered to Calvin.

"We must be expected, else how would these fellows know our names?" he reasoned.

Now they were in a long drawing-room, where the seventh bewigged servant asked them to be seated, saying Her Grace would be informed of their arrival.

While they waited, Harriet admired the room. In America, walls were always papered, carpets had large, gaudy floral designs, and planned color schemes were unknown. But this drawing-room was an harmonious blending of tones of green, accented with white and gold. The walls were panelled in pale green satin damask, edged with gold bands. The same damask covered the white-and-gold furniture. The carpet was unpatterned—a darker green with light green overtones—and in every window stood a basket of pale yellow primroses. Above the mantelpiece hung a gold-framed portrait of the Duchess' children.

"It is composed like a beautiful picture," thought Harriet. "I must write some articles on home decoration for my column, and try some of these effects in my own house."

Just then the Duchess entered, and led Harriet away to her private boudoir. At forty-seven this gracious lady was still a noted beauty. She was wearing a simple white muslin, topped by a mole-gray, velvet-and-satin basque, and her back hair was confined by a gold-net snood besprinkled with diamonds.

Harriet had met the Duchess before, and now she threw herself upon the lady's mercy.

"I'm only a village housewife, you know, and I must confess, your horde of footmen frighten me nearly out of

my wits. Please tell me, Your Grace, just what is a 'levee,' and what is expected of me?"

"There will be a few special guests for lunch," explained the Duchess. "Just my parents, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Russell, and the Marquis of Lansdowne—you'll like him, he's an Abolitionist. Then later other guests will come. It's really very informal, and nothing is expected of you, my dear. Just be your sweet, natural self."

This meal called "lunch" was new to a Yankee housewife; folks at home ate breakfast, dinner, and supper. But it was only a reception, after all, and Harriet maintained her poise so well that the society reporters present described her as "perfectly self-possessed." Lord Shaftsbury made a short speech of welcome, and the Duchess placed upon Harriet's wrist a bracelet—a miniature slave-chain of finely wrought gold—saying, "We trust this may be a memorial of that other chain which is soon to be broken."

Thus Harriet was launched upon her brief career in London society. She was the most fêted woman in town, and the nobility soon ceased to awe her. In witty conversation she could more than hold her own with them. They were just people, after all.

Yet, there was one who would always be shrouded in glamor—a frail, gentle, white-haired woman, with a child-like simplicity and friendliness—she who had once been the wife of the poet, Byron. She fell in love with Harriet on sight, and Harriet placed Lady Byron on the pedestal once occupied by the poet who had been her childhood idol. This friendship meant much to her. It was the most

incredible thing that had come to her in that year of miracles—a thing to be remembered all her days.

For all her poise, Harriet could not help comparing her looks with those of the blooming British women.

"I feel as faded and dried up as a pinch of snuff," she confessed to Mrs. Follen. "How do these women manage to keep their youth? In America a woman of forty is resigned to looking old, but here the forties are the prime of life. Is it the climate?"

"Much of it is due to one's state of mind," answered the all-wise Mrs. Follen. "If you think you are old, you are. But the women here have their beauty secrets. There is an oil massage that works wonders; and it's no sin here to use a touch of rouge and powder. You come with me, Mrs. Stowe. I know a woman . . ."

The results of these secret visits to the masseuse and cosmetician were very gratifying. Calvin often remarked how much his wife was gaining in health! Thus encouraged, Mrs. Follen's protégée consented to have her hair dressed more elaborately, with curls. But when it came to *décolleté* evening gowns, Harriet drew the line.

"I've never worn a low-cut dress in my life," she told Mrs. Follen, "and it's too late to begin now. My neck and arms are too thin, for one thing, and it's always chilly in this country. No, I'll stick to my high-necked, long-sleeved dresses, and add some lace."

"Perhaps you're right," admitted Mrs. Follen, "but there's one thing you simply *must* do—have your portrait done by Richmond, the crayon artist. He's all the rage.

And Burnard, the cameo cutter, wants you to sit for him, too."

So Harriet sat for both these artists. The Richmond portrait was a very poor likeness, but it was more flattering than most. A plague of cheap prints, called likenesses of Mrs. Stowe, began to appear in all the shop windows, but copies had been made of copies until any resemblance to Harriet was purely coincidental. She thought these prints were even homelier than she was, and with amused annoyance made a collection of the monstrosities for the home-folks.

The Professor was beginning to fear his wife's head would be turned by all this attention. Certainly she was getting unwomanly ideas. She had said to him one day, "Calvin, have you observed how the British women talk politics right along with the men? No one here seems to think politics is strictly men's business. I imagine the women wield a great deal of influence."

Another thing which galled Professor Stowe was the growing British attitude of condemnation toward America because of her slavery system. "The crime of the age," they called it, and "the awful wickedness of our American cousins." She advocated breaking off relations with the United States until the sin of slavery should be wiped out by immediate and complete emancipation. It seemed that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the visit of its authoress had unloosed the fury of the fanatics. Harriet, too, was pained by what she heard, and wished she could speak in defense of the Southerners, who were, in spite of all, her countrymen.

The Stowes' chance came at the annual meeting of the British Anti-slavery Society—a great event, made greater by Harriet's presence. Four thousand excited people jammed Exeter Hall. Women fainted. Policemen were helpless. Inspired by mob hysteria, orators heaped abuse on all things American, and the audience hissed the name of Franklin Pierce, the new President and Calvin Stowe's old classmate. It was more than any homesick, patriotic American could bear. The plump Professor threw caution aside, along with the notes of his tactfully prepared speech, and spoke his mind.

He informed his startled hearers that freeing a few thousand slaves in the remote West Indies, as the British had done, was one thing, while uprooting from American home soil a three-billion-dollar institution involving half a nation's wealth, was quite another.

"Britain herself is responsible for American slavery," he shouted. "England introduced it in Colonial days. Now she keeps it going through her huge consumption of slave-grown cotton. Why do you not insist on free-grown cotton? Are you willing to sacrifice one penny of your profits for the sake of doing away with the cursed business? No! You prate about the conscience of the cotton growers. Should cotton consumers have no conscience? The receiver is as guilty as the thief!"

Amazed and angered by these strong words, the audience filled the hall with ominous mutterings. If Calvin had been anyone but the husband of the idolized Mrs. Stowe, the mob would have thrown him into the Thames. But order

was restored at last, and the meeting went on to the end.

"I was proud of you, Calvin," declared Harriet later. "I've been longing to twist the British lion's tail myself, and you did it in noble fashion." Her own chance was soon to come.

"Let 'em rave!" said the Professor, as he read the newspapers' attacks upon him. "I'm going back, thank goodness, to the quiet of my classroom."

Calvin Stowe was due back for the summer term at Andover, and could no longer delay his departure. But brother Charles would take his place as Harriet's public spokesman, and the well-informed Mrs. Follen would continue to act as adviser on social questions.

One of these involved Queen Victoria herself. It was rumored that the Queen had positively declined to meet Mrs. Stowe. But why? Mrs. Follen had the answer.

"To do so would look as if England were taking an official stand with American Abolitionists," she explained. "Conservative cotton interests demand a strict neutrality in America's slavery disputes. So the Queen doesn't dare. You see, my dear, in diplomatic circles you're regarded as a dangerous woman."

"A dangerous woman?" thought Harriet. "Can this be I? One short year ago I was in Brunswick, an obscure housewife, wishing vainly for a silk dress! That reminds me . . .

"Mrs. Follen, I have a dress length of brown China silk I bought in Boston, thinking I'd have it made up here. Can you recommend a good dressmaker?"

Of course she could. In due time a woman came, took Harriet's measurements, and departed with the material.

But this innocent episode gave the carping news hounds their chance. It was blazoned on the front pages that Mrs. Stowe, supposedly the friend and champion of the working classes, was patronizing sweatshops!

Harriet made reply in an open letter which was a masterpiece. She avowed her ignorance of this crime, saying she had not known the woman she engaged was the manager of such an establishment, where girls and even little children worked eighteen hours a day. As for championing the cause of the seamstresses, she would never think of interfering with any British institution, especially when the good citizens were already aware of its evils.

This broad hint for the British critics of America ended the triumphal London visit on a sour note, and Harriet was glad when they left for the Continent.

In Paris Harriet and Charles stopped with an American woman who lived near the Louvre. They spent many happy hours examining the art treasures of this famed museum.

"Think of it!" exclaimed Harriet. "I have starved all my life, trying to imagine what true Art was like. And now to live within a stone's throw of these miracles."

Her favorite piece of sculpture was a recently discovered Greek statue, unknown in America—the armless torso of a lovely woman. The French were calling it the Venus de Milo. Harriet wrote about it in her travel notes, which were later published in *Sunny Memories*.

In the Paris salons she met many Americans—even one who had lived in Litchfield—and a few famous Frenchmen. Those schoolgirl lessons under Miss Degan had not been

wasted; for now, with Charles's help, she was soon conversing fluently in French. Everyone had read and admired her novel. There had been four translations into French, and booksellers even reported an increase in sales of the Bible, as "the book Uncle Tom read."

With her brother, Harriet climbed the Arc de Triomphe, and drove in an open carriage along the boulevards and through the Bois. They watched the procession of Louis Napoleon, the new tyrant-emperor. He received no cheers from the crowds. Naturally not, thought Harriet; and remembering the Bastille, and the great-hearted Lafayette, she was very sad that the French had lost their democratic liberty.

Sarah and her two men went on ahead to Italy, but Harriet was loath to leave Paris. There were those enticing shops! She went on a spending spree, buying gifts for all the home-folks, and finery for herself. She actually bought a gown of the most famous couturière in Paris, who, they said, had once turned a duchess out of her salon. Best of all, she bought Charles a fine violin—a genuine Amati. He was in ecstasies over it, and Harriet felt anew the power and wonder of money, which could make her dear ones so happy.

But they simply *must* see Switzerland. The brother and sister journeyed to Geneva, where Sarah joined them, and they all made the usual excursions to Mont Blanc, the Mer de Glace, the monastery of St. Bernard. They found that, even in the remote mountain villages, people had read *Uncle Tom*, and were thrilled to see its author.

Chillon Castle was of special interest to Harriet. In its dungeon the prisoner of Byron's poem had lived and died. What memories it recalled, of Litchfield, and Aunt Esther!

Harriet missed her children, and was growing so homesick she would gladly have set sail for America; but Calvin, before he left, had insisted on her seeing Germany, and meeting his scholar friends there. So, dutifully, she and Charles hastened through Germany, viewing its cathedrals, its universities, and the ruined castles of the Rhine.

In late August they returned to Liverpool to board the *S. S. Arctic*. The Mayor begged leave to give Harriet a great public breakfast, but she declined. She had had enough of that sort of thing. But the good Croppers gave her a private breakfast, at which, this time, Harriet was properly dressed—in a Paris gown and bonnet!

A farewell committee accompanied the travellers to the wharf, where a short ceremony was held, and prayers offered for their safety on the perilous sea. At last, amid much cheering and waving, they were off, and the shores of England faded from view.

Harriet sank into her deck chair, weary but content. Charles, by her side, remarked, "We've seen a great deal in five months, but still we haven't seen Italy."

"Italy will wait," sighed Harriet. "Next time I travel abroad, I mean to bring the children."

"How strange life is," she mused. "In one short year I've had all the things I dreamed of as a child: fame and riches, travel, and meeting the great ones of the earth. And yet, how different it all is from the imagining . . . how

much less satisfying! Wealth solves many problems, but it creates new ones. Fame—my undeserved fame—makes enemies, and works to separate me from my loved ones.”

Thoughtfully she turned the slave-chain bracelet on her wrist, to read the inscription, “A memorial of a chain soon to be broken.” Would this prophecy prove true? Had her words, scattered like leaves among mankind, indeed served “to quicken a new birth” of Liberty? If so, her life had not been lived in vain.

Part V

**BROKEN
CHAINS**

1860-1863



PART V

B R O K E N

C H A I N S

1860-1863

XXIII

SIX YEARS LATER, Harriet and the twins were in Italy when the news came of Lincoln's nomination to the Presidency.

The much travelled, Paris-educated twins were now twenty-three, and their mother's constant companions. They took dictation for all her writings, and looked after the correspondence, signing many of the letters themselves, in a hand only an expert could tell from Harriet's own.

Hatty, seated on the vine-clad piazza of their Florentine house, was sorting the mail when Eliza entered, leading her handsome Italian greyhound, Giglio.

"Florence is lovely in the spring," Eliza observed, removing her bonnet, "though I still think there's no place quite like Paris. Where's Mama?"

"Gone to call on Mrs. Browning," replied Hatty. "I sup-

pose they will be discussing Spiritualism till all hours. Look, Lisa, here's a letter from Uncle Henry Ward."

"How very unusual!" exclaimed her sister. "There must be something amiss in Brooklyn. Read it, Hatty."

Hatty skimmed the pages. ". . . Auction of pews in Plymouth Church brought thirty thousand dollars . . . trustees talk of building a new edifice to seat six thousand . . . Uncle has ransomed another slave girl at a pulpit 'auction' . . . made another woman suffrage speech . . ."

"Doesn't he ever write about anything but himself?"

"Um-m . . . says Congressmen are all carrying pistols during sessions . . . South Carolina threatens to secede . . . Oh, here's news! Aunt Eunice was in a runaway, and severely injured!"

"Too bad," sighed Eliza. "Aunt Eunice is a Tartar, but she acts as a balance wheel for Uncle."

"Poor old Uncle Henry! If he were only content to be the most popular preacher in America—but he's always going off on some wild tangent."

"You mean he's always trying to imitate Mama's successes—like his lecture tour of the British Isles."

Eliza took up the stack of American newspapers. The twins tried to keep up with politics back home, because Mama was interested, but it was all very confusing. Now that the Democratic Party was splitting, it was still worse, and there was even talk of a new party.

"Who is this man Lincoln?" she asked. "I see the Republicans are running him for President, instead of Mr. Seward."

"I don't know," shrugged Hatty. "We'll have to ask Mama."

Harriet returned some time later to find the mail neatly sorted and stacked.

"How are the reviews of my *Minister's Wooing*?" she inquired eagerly.

"Very mixed," answered Eliza. "Some are quite enthusiastic. Mr. Lowell says it's your best novel, but the religious papers are horrified. They say it's rank heresy, and an assault on the very foundations of the Calvinist faith."

Harriet smiled grimly. "It's a good thing your Grandfather Beecher is past his reading days. My heresy is far worse than his ever was."

"What do you care what the ministers think?" cried Hatty. "The public likes it, and it's selling very well. Mama, who is Abraham Lincoln?"

"That Illinois lawyer who debated the slavery issue with Douglas a year or so ago, and got the better of him. Why?"

"The Republicans have nominated him for President."

"What? Why, that's impossible!" exclaimed Harriet. "I thought Mr. Seward was—let me see those papers." After a moment she added, "They might have done worse. Lincoln is a strong anti-slavery man."

"South Carolina is going to secede from the Union if he's elected," said Eliza.

"Oh, they're always threatening to secede about something, but they never do. It's only their way of expressing the discontent that fills the world today."

"Even here in Italy," Hatty shuddered. "I shall never

forget those horrible riots in Rome. Let's go back to Paris."

"Better still, we're going back to America," replied Harriet. "I'm weary of Italy and its strife, although I do sympathize with Garibaldi's hopes to overthrow Bourbon despotism in Sicily."

On the steamer *Europa*, bound for America, were Harriet's new publisher and his wife, James and Annie Fields, and Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Hawthorne. The shy, retiring Hawthorne had never met his distinguished countrywoman before—he had often said he detested equally three things: slavery, Abolitionists and lady writers. On ship-board he was aloof at first, but nobody could resist Harriet when she chose to be charming, and the Hawthornes soon joined the party. The two famous authors had much in common—a hatred of strife and slavery, and a love of cats, Italy and New England. The Fields were brilliant conversationalists, and all in all, Harriet thought she had never enjoyed a voyage so much.

THE HOME in Andover to which Harriet and her daughters were returning was called the Stone Cabin—not because it was small, for it wasn't, but because it had been remodelled and furnished with the first proceeds of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Originally a barn-like structure used by the college for manual arts, it had been made over according to Harriet's plan, and under her supervision.

She had her own study, of course, where, at last, she could write in peace. There, in the past six years, she had

produced two more novels and innumerable articles and poems for her column.

The Stone Cabin was spacious, and charmingly livable. Every room had a fireplace, for Harriet detested stoves. True to the vow of her book-hungry girlhood, the walls were lined with books—hundreds of volumes, ancient and modern, many autographed copies. There were collections of many sorts: gifts, souvenirs and relics, picked up during her travels, or sent her by admirers and friends.

Chief among these was a set of twenty-six massive volumes bound in black leather, with the American eagle stamped in gold on the cover. The first of these contained a short printed document with the majestic title, *An Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, to their Sisters, the Women of the United States of America*. It was a plea that American slavery be ended. The vellum pages of these books contained the signatures of over half a million women. The Duchess of Sutherland and her friends, inspired by *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, had launched this enterprise, which had taken over a year to complete. While many gentlemen on both sides of the Atlantic thought the scheme foolish and meddlesome, Harriet was very proud to be the recipient of the *Affectionate Address*, because it reminded her of her dear English friends, and their faith in her as the leading woman of America in the anti-slavery cause.

While books dominated the scene in the Stone Cabin, there were other significant features. A fine oil portrait of Eliza Tyler Stowe had the place of honor.

"Professor Stowe's first wife, and my dear friend," Harriet would explain. "We had it done from a miniature."

Every year, on the anniversary of Eliza's death, Calvin and Harriet sat before the portrait, and spent an hour recalling the virtues of the departed lady.

There were portraits of Harriet, too, and flowers everywhere, with hanging pots of ivy framing the windows. The neighbors marvelled at the care with which Mrs. Stowe arranged her flowers. To them a "bouquet" was simply a handful of flowers stuck in a vase, but to Harriet a flower arrangement was a work of art.

"You'd think she was going to paint them," whispered the Andover ladies. (In fact, she sometimes did.) "And such plain walls and carpets! And no stoves! And the furniture covered with tapestry and brocade! I suppose she's trying to be Continental."

The visitors did not guess that Harriet was actually pioneering in interior decoration, and that her later articles on home beautification would start a trend which has left its mark on every modern home.

Harriet had come to Andover a celebrity and a woman of means, able to do as she pleased; and she did so, to the amazement and frequent disapproval of that staid and pious community. From the way she celebrated Christmas in the English fashion, with holly and evergreens, Yule logs and candles, it was shockingly evident that she had Episcopalian leanings.

For the children she made the Stone Cabin a gay gathering place, where the youngsters held tableaux, played

charades and even *danced*. Nothing so wicked as that new thing called the "waltz," in which the gentleman actually put his arm about his partner, but still, dancing was dancing! And it was common knowledge that, at least once, Mrs. Stowe had attended a *theatre*!

It was true. In Boston she had seen a performance of one of the numerous stage versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She had gone with a young journalist, who had been forced to explain the plot to her! The star played Topsy, very cleverly, but while Harriet laughed with the audience, she was bewildered and disappointed at seeing her brain-child in such different guise.

Her neighbors admitted Mrs. Stowe was generous. She never turned away any sort of beggar, and she was a great hand at getting up bazaars, but they never felt at ease with her. Socially she was a misfit in Andover, as she had so often been, but this time for far different reasons.

As for the Stowe children—well, they were not the sort Andover parents could hold up as models. They were too lively and talkative in the presence of their elders, and a bit spoiled, especially that pert Georgiana, and that young limb, Charley, who furnished his mother with material for articles on child-training problems.

In spite of all this, Calvin Stowe seemed well satisfied with his family. Whatever Harriet might do was all right. And the children—"all Beecher, every one of 'em!" he would remark proudly, meaning their wit, intelligence and high spirits. But they had no leaning toward teaching or preaching.

Freddy, small and delicate at nineteen, wanted to become a doctor. The twins were content to serve their parents as secretaries. Henry, the most serious and loving of them all, had met his death in the swift currents of the Connecticut River, while a student at Dartmouth. And Georgiana yearned secretly to be an actress.

Vivacious little Georgie at seventeen looked much as Harriet had at that age, but it was only a physical resemblance. There was nothing of the shy dreamer about her. She was self-confident, gay and wilful. While attending school in Boston, she had gone to the theatre, and knew at once that acting was her ambition. There was no chance of a Beecher's having a stage career, of course, but Georgie began doing excellent imitations of the well-known actresses, and was soon in great demand as an entertainer. Everyone told her she had real talent.

GEORGIE came flying out to meet the returned travellers, and flung herself upon them with cries of joy and a torrent of questions.

"Did you have a good crossing? Mama, were you seasick? Yes, I know, Lisa, I should say *mal de mer*, it's more refined. What all did you buy in Paris, Hatty? Bring me anything? Mama, did you see that dear Mr. Ruskin again—you must have! He's half in love with you, isn't he? Look, girls! Mama's blushing!"

"What do you know about Mr. Ruskin?" demanded Eliza loftily.

"A lot. I met him in Switzerland, that time Mama and Papa took me to Chamonix. His attentions fairly embarrassed mama, *n'est-ce pas?*"

"He writes very cordial letters," remarked Hatty, "and come to think of it, Mama always answers them herself."

"Don't be so school-girlishly romantic, Georgie," reproved Eliza. "Mr. Ruskin is a great writer and critic, and we're glad he likes Mama's novels."

"How could he help falling in love with our beautiful Mama?" said Georgie. "Oh, I must show you my newest imitation," she rattled on. "I do Charlotte Cushman as Meg Merrilies, and people rave about it."

Harriet smiled fondly but helplessly at her youngest daughter. "I don't know where you get your taste and talent for such things," she said, faintly disapproving.

"From you, Mama," said Hatty. "Don't forget your imitation of old Sojourner Truth, the Negro prophetess. Georgie, she did it several times for the artist crowd in Rome last winter, and it was a great hit."

"Mama, I'll bet you'd have been a wonderful actress," cried Georgie, "if you hadn't been born a Beecher."

"No, Georgie," replied Harriet. "I've never liked to face a crowd. But your Grandfather Beecher was a great actor, in his way, and so is Henry Ward, both with great power over an audience."

When the greetings were over, Harriet went alone to visit Henry's nearby grave, and to plant it with summer flowers. She always kept something in bloom there, from the first crocus of spring to the last chrysanthemum of au-

turn. She and Calvin had never become reconciled to the loss of their eldest son. It was the bitterest sorrow of Harriet's life, and for a time she had almost lost her faith in God.

THE PRESIDENTIAL campaign of 1860 was the strangest and bitterest in the country's history. It was not merely political, but sectional—a death struggle between North and South. There were three candidates besides Lincoln—Northern and Southern Democrats, and the candidate of a new third party.

The Stowes read the campaign news with great interest.

"It is hard to see why the South is making such an issue of this campaign," said Harriet. "The Republican platform promises no interference with existing slavery."

"I believe they're just looking for an excuse to secede," replied Calvin. "Probably can't bear the thought of another four years under a Republican majority."

The divided opposition could not stem the tide of growing Lincoln popularity. "Honest Abe, the Rail-splitter" was a potent rallying cry. Throughout the North earnest Republicans held torchlight processions, the marchers wearing a uniform of oilcloth cape and helmet—originally designed to keep dripping oil off the garments of the torchbearers, but soon adopted as a party symbol.

Harriet and ten-year-old Charley watched these processions in the streets of Andover, the marchers singing, and the smoky torches flaring in the darkness. Charley was deeply impressed.

"Mama, what are those long things the men are carrying on their shoulders, all decorated with flowers and streamers?"

"Those are rails," answered his mother. "The sort they build fences of out West. They are a Republican emblem, because Mr. Lincoln used to split rails for a living. He came up from poverty, and educated himself—just like your Papa, Charley, only Mr. Lincoln never went to college. Those rails stand for hard, honest toil, and a courage that never admits defeat. I'm sorry sometimes, that you children have never known real poverty and struggle."

During those last turbulent days, before the election, Harriet was in Brooklyn, visiting a friend, Mrs. Howard. While she was there, she agreed to write a new serial story for the editor of the *Independent*, though she was already engaged to do one for the *Atlantic Monthly*.

"Won't it be terribly hard to keep two serials going at once?" asked Susan Howard.

"They'll be very different," explained Harriet. "One is laid in Italy, the other on the Maine coast. The fact is, Susan, I need the money."

"Why, Harriet! Everyone imagines you're simply rolling in riches."

"Far from it!" Harriet smiled ruefully. "My novels sell only in the North and in England, you know. The children's education has been costly, and Freddy is in Harvard Medical School now. No matter what I earn, it seems the money just slips through my fingers."

Harriet visited her father in Brooklyn Heights. At eighty-

five, Lyman Beecher was a pathetic figure. Both mind and body had failed, and he lived, silent, in a dream world of the past. Harriet was glad that she, with Charles and Kate, had helped him write his autobiography six years before, while his mind had been fairly clear.

She called on Henry Ward and Eunice, of course. Henry, now grown stout and complacent, was a hard man to see—never at home. He no longer confided in Harriet since her rise to fame, and he seldom wrote to her, then only the briefest of notes. Eunice, however, had softened with the years, and was glad to see Harriet.

The forthcoming election had aroused the highest interest in Henry Ward, who no longer hesitated to talk politics and Abolition from his pulpit.

"A Republican victory will solve everything!" he cried. "Put a stop to all the violent talk. Do you know, the Southerners have threatened to hang me high as Haman if I ever show my face south of the line? But I'm not worried. It shows I've got under their skins. My slave auctions did it."

"What do you think of Mr. Lincoln, Henry?"

"A mere figurehead. A well-meaning nonentity. I was sorry our old friend Salmon Chase didn't get the nomination. And some even wanted *me* to run! But I declined that honor."

"I thought some of Lincoln's arguments against slavery in the Douglas debates were very sound," declared Harriet.

"Sound, yes, but not strong enough. The man's no Abolitionist. And he's certainly not an eloquent speaker. His language is very simple."

"So is the language of the Bible," retorted his sister.

"Oh, I'm supporting Lincoln, and praying that he'll win," said Henry. "His election will keep us out of war. And if some states want to secede, let 'em go! We can stand it if they can!"

Ladies stayed off the streets on election day, of course, but Harriet and Susan Howard sat up late for two nights, listening for the returns to come in. It was not until the third night that the count was complete, and it was certain Lincoln had won. The city went wild.

Harriet rejoiced with the throng, but she felt herself a mere spectator of this political drama. She did not suspect its tremendous import, to the nation and to her children. Nor did she know what Mr. Sumner and other statesmen were saying—that without Harriet Beecher Stowe and her strangely powerful *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, there would have been no President Lincoln!

XXIV

THE NATION moved swiftly toward its greatest disaster. South Carolina withdrew from the Union, quickly followed by Alabama, Georgia, and the Gulf states. They called themselves the Confederate States of America, and set up their own government under Jefferson Davis.

The North was bewildered and dismayed. It could scarcely believe these malcontents would deliberately dissolve the Union, and prove the "noble experiment," De-

mocracy, a failure. True, many Southerners also loved the Union, but the slave-holders were a powerful minority. Despite the Republican pledge not to interfere with existing slavery, they could not forget that Lincoln had said, "This government cannot exist half slave and half free." They feared for the future under this man. They feared new slave uprisings, and above all, they resented Northern criticism. The hot-heads were spoiling for a fight.

Few Northerners believed it would actually come to war. Some thought the states had a lawful right to secede, but hoped a compromise might yet bring them back. The South, however, was making ready. A Southern Secretary of War was secretly transferring munitions from Northern arsenals to the South; Georgia was fitting out a gunboat; shipments of French rifles were arriving at Southern ports; Colt rifle factories in New England were running day and night to fill Southern orders. -

The Confederates' first move was to seize all Federal forts below the border, except Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. But President Buchanan did nothing. He would soon be out; let Lincoln clean up the mess. Everyone was wondering anxiously what Lincoln would do.

In his inaugural address on March fourth, Lincoln made clear his policy "to preserve, protect and defend the Union," at all costs. Secession was unlawful, and must be regarded as rebellion. This was his belief and that of the party which had elected him. He would do his duty.

Fort Sumter, still in Northern hands, had been cut off from supplies for months by Southern gunboats. Lincoln

notified Jefferson Davis that he was sending a supply ship to the fort, under Federal protection. The Confederates' answer was to open fire on the fort, garrisoned by a handful of men. These held out gallantly for two days under heavy bombardment, but were forced to surrender.

On April thirteenth the dread news flashed over the wires—Fort Sumter had fallen! Dazed Northerners tried to realize that this meant war. Then indignation mounted. This surprise attack had been cowardly, inexcusable. The Stars and Stripes had been fired upon! It needed only this to unite the North in wholehearted defense of the Union. If those Rebels wanted a fight, they should have it!

Henry Ward Beecher thundered from his flower-banked pulpit, "It is ten thousand times better to have war than to have slavery!" The congregation shouted, "Amen."

Harriet viewed the national crisis with mixed emotions. She loved peace, but the fighting Beecher blood was up. Then, with Lincoln's call for volunteers, her thoughts turned to Fred. He was too frail, too nervous to make a soldier. Surely with so many sturdier boys in the land, they wouldn't need her Freddy. And yet, if she knew her son, he would want to enlist. She went at once to Boston to talk with him.

Fred's first words were jubilant. "Mama, I've enlisted!" "Already?" Harriet gasped.

"I'd have talked to you and Father first, if there had been time, but I knew you'd approve, and I wanted to be the very first on the roll of volunteers. As it is, I'm near it—Company A, 1st Massachusetts Infantry."

"But Freddy, dear, you're not strong. Are you sure you—"

"Of course, Mama. I'm all right!" said Fred impatiently. "They passed me, anyway. It's to be only for three months, you know."

"I'm afraid it will be longer. You haven't finished a year of your medical course. I do wish you'd waited, and gone into the Medical Corps."

"Why, the war will be over long before then! And all my classmates were enlisting. What would they have thought of me, hanging back—the son of Harriet Beecher Stowe? Our name is something to live up to. If this war will end the cursed slavery business, I'll be carrying on from where you left off. Mama, don't you see? I *had* to enlist now, because I am your son!"

Harriet was silent. She was seeing again the kitchen on Federal Street . . . her children listening as she read them the death of Uncle Tom . . . the girls and Freddy in tears, Henry saying bitterly, "Mama, slavery is the cruelest thing in the world!"

"It was I," she thought, "who instilled this hatred of slavery in Fred's heart . . . perhaps, through my book, in the hearts of boys the country over. These are the lads now flocking to the colors with a high courage, hoping not only to save the Union, but to end slavery. Losing my son . . . that may be part of the burden God laid upon me when He sent me the vision in Brunswick church. I cannot flinch now!"

Tenderly she kissed Fred's cheek. "I understand, Son. Your father and I are proud of you. Be a good soldier!"

Harriet returned to Andover, and, seated at her desk, tried to write the weekly article. There was nothing to write about but the war. On the campus close by, the Andover Volunteers were drilling. The sound of fife and drum rang ceaselessly in her ears. Now the boys were singing as they marched—a new song, sprung from nowhere:

*John Brown's body lies a-mould-ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mould-ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mould-ring in the grave,
As we go marching on.*

Stern old gray-beard, John Brown, who believed God's voice had told him to seize the arsenal at Harpers Ferry, and lead the slaves to freedom; who had sat, grimly braving capture, his sons dying at his feet, waiting, waiting for the joyous slaves who never came. Old John Brown, refusing to escape the gallows, believing his death, more than his life, would aid the Cause. Criminal, crack-pot fanatic, or militant saint, raised by Southern persecutions to the rank of hero and martyr in Northern eyes.

*Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His soul goes marching on!*

The insistent rhythm beat dizzily in Harriet's brain. The tramp of marching feet grew louder . . . louder . . . All over America she could hear them—the young men, march-

ing to battle with a song on their lips . . . "His soul goes marching on." Death could be glorious . . . Heroes and martyrs, their souls march on forever!

She seized her pen, and swiftly wrote a message to the war mothers of the North: "Our sons are marching away. Some may never return. But this is a cause to die for, and thanks be to God, our young men embrace it as a bride, and are ready to die."

EVERYONE thought it would be a short war. Each side underestimated the strength and courage of the other. The North had greater resources in men and money, but was unprepared. The South had superb generals, and had been preparing for years. Southerners were fighting to defend their homes and preserve their way of life; Northerners, for an ideal—the Union, with democracy and freedom for all men. They were more evenly matched than they knew. Thus the bloodiest war in all history was launched in over-confidence and holiday mood. The untrained civilian armies did not know what war was like. But they were soon to learn.

Each week Harriet went to Boston to see Fred, who was proving himself a born soldier. In no time, it seemed, he was off to defend Washington. In July he marched with McDowell toward Richmond, while his anxious mother prayed for his safety. He was in the inglorious defeat at Bull Run, but performed so well that he was made a sergeant, and given a furlough.

The Bull Run disaster spurred the North to greater war efforts, and filled the South with undue optimism. "The Yankees can't fight!" Southerners jeered. "It will be a short war."

The South had a better reason for believing it could win. It was counting on aid from England, because of the cotton trade, which had been cut off through Lincoln's blockade of Southern ports. Already battleships for the South were being built in British shipyards, and doubtless England would soon recognize the Confederacy as a separate nation, and become her powerful ally. British newspapers, neutrality forgotten, openly favored the South.

Of all those who were shocked and indignant at this British attitude, the most deeply hurt was Harriet. With her it was almost a personal affront. Where were her British friends—those anti-slavery leaders who had dined and fêted her, praised her book, and pledged undying loyalty to the Cause? Had they all been insincere?

"The Queen, poor thing, is mourning the death of her husband," she said to Calvin. "I suppose she's forgotten the neutrality pledge. But why has Parliament turned against us?"

"I doubt if the politicians were ever for us," replied Calvin, gloomily. "They want free trade with the South. No doubt they'll be glad to see our country divided, our system of government fail. Maybe our Revolution still rankles."

"I can't believe it," said Harriet. She looked thoughtfully at the long row of volumes with the signatures of over half a million women friends of freedom. "Men think

of nothing but money. Women think straight to the heart of things. If the women were running the British government, it would be a different story."

"My dear, you talk like a suffragist," reproved Calvin.

"Perhaps I am, in a way. Not that I favor going to the polls. Voting isn't the only way women can take part in politics. Behind every man is a woman, and in England she has influence. I wish I could appeal to the British women—make them understand this is a war to end slavery."

But was it? So far nothing had been done toward emancipation, except to declare captured slaves contraband of war, and place them in detention camps. This prevented them from aiding their masters, but they should be fighting in Northern armies, aiding their deliverers. What was Lincoln thinking of?

Harriet seized her pen. "Now is the time for emancipation . . ." Henry Ward took up the cry, followed by other strident voices, attacking Lincoln's policy. Lincoln replied guardedly that his first concern was to preserve the Union. He dared not explain his position that immediate emancipation would be a betrayal of the pledge Congress had made the four loyal border states, and would result in their joining the Rebellion. The time was not yet ripe. Until Northern armies were in possession of slave territory, a decree of freedom could not be enforced, and might bring slave uprisings and massacres. Ignoring his critics, Lincoln moved cautiously and wisely. He wanted no harm to come to the Southerners. Rebels or no, they were Americans.

A long year passed with no decisive battle. Grant did well in the West, but in the more vital East, Richmond was still untaken, and in spite of Confederate boasts, so was Washington. Northern generalship was poor; each change of commander proved worse than the last. The home-folks grew impatient at the oft-repeated phrase, "All's quiet on the Potomac," but spring brought only the disastrous battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

It was a time of bitter disillusionment. People were losing faith in their armies and their leaders. It became the fashion to blame the Administration for everything, from domestic discomforts to military losses. Henry Ward became editor-in-chief of the *Independent*, and led the attack upon Lincoln. Why didn't Lincoln progress the war faster? Above all, why didn't he free the slaves?

Henry's editorials occupied the choice spot, page one, column one, which Harriet's had filled for ten years. So Harriet cancelled her contract. There was hardly room for two Beechers on one paper. But she wished Henry Ward was not so bitterly opinionated.

Lincoln was only waiting for a Northern victory. Antietam gave him his chance, and in September he issued the text of an Emancipation Proclamation, which he planned to sign on January 1, 1863. Harriet was jubilant. Now she could write that long-planned appeal to the British women—a *Reply to their Affectionate Address*. But the doubters were saying it was only a trick—Lincoln would never sign. She must be sure, before she launched her keenest weapon. So much depended on it.

"I am going to Washington, and talk with Lincoln himself, if possible," she resolved. "I can see Fred there, too."

Taking Hatty and Charley with her, she entrained for the Capitol. Soldiers were everywhere—gaunt and ill, many maimed for life, yet they seemed cheerful. Oh, that this awful war might end soon!

Washington in wartime was a vast confusion—every home a hospital, every street a camp ground. Harriet's carriage wound slowly amid rubbish heaps, army supply-wagons, and jostling groups of the boys in blue. She took Charley with her on this visit to the White House. It would be something for the lad to remember all his days; and then, Mr. Lincoln had sons of his own. For the first time in years, Harriet was feeling a little shy.

In the small, simply furnished room called the President's study, these two national leaders came, for the first and only time, face to face—the tall man with the rugged, weary face, and the dainty little woman with the great, sad eyes. Each had come up from poverty, had known sorrow and struggle. Each had hated slavery, and loved humanity with an intensity which dominated their lives.

Abraham Lincoln looked down in surprise upon his tiny, black-clad visitor, and his lined face lighted with a rare smile as he clasped her slender hand.

"So this is the little lady who made this big war," he said.

Harriet introduced her son, and seated him stiffly beside her on a divan. A cannel-coal fire burned in the grate, but was powerless against the November chill. Lincoln stood before it, warming his hands in an habitual gesture.

"I do love an open fire," he remarked. "We always had one to home."

Charley's eyes widened on hearing that funny phrase, "to home." But it must be right, if the President said it.

"So did we," smiled Harriet. "I shall never forget the huge fireplace in our kitchen at Litchfield. We children used to roast chestnuts in the ashes, and bake fire-cake."

"We called it johnny-cake," mused Lincoln.

Suddenly all constraint vanished, and they talked freely for an hour. Lincoln told of the many obstacles which prevented his freeing the slaves earlier, of the problems yet to be solved. He spoke of his plans for the South after the war—help for the people of both races. Harriet told of her disappointment at the reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which she had hoped would lead to gradual emancipation, and to peace.

Lincoln hated war, even more than she, and the slaughter of his countrymen filled him with grief and horror. He slept little, ate little, and spent long hours visiting camps and hospitals. Pityingly, Harriet sensed the awful burden resting on the shoulders of this weary man, whose sympathies and ideals matched her own. Oh, if she could only do something to help him!

Perhaps she could; that was why she had come. She told him of her plan for influencing England, through its women, against support of the Confederacy. Lincoln was keenly interested. England's course from now on might well determine the outcome of the war.

"I know England," said Harriet, "and I, of all people,

should be the one to show them their error. When British women, high and low, understand that our war is ending slavery, they will use their power in favor of the Union."

"Go ahead, Mrs. Stowe. God willing, I will sign the Proclamation on New Year's Day," Lincoln promised.

Whatever doubts Harriet may have had before as to Lincoln's wisdom and ability, she left the White House that day one of his staunchest supporters. She was a fine judge of character, and could recognize true greatness. She did what she could to silence Lincoln's doubters and critics, assuring them the nation could be in no better hands. Henry Ward did an about-face, with his usual nonchalance, and led the chorus of praise for the Emancipator.

Harriet wrote her *Reply to the British Women*, proving herself a master of argument as well as of fiction. With admirable restraint she recounted England's aids to the enemy, reproaching it for desertion in the hour of need. The *Reply* was published in *The Atlantic*, and copied widely throughout America and England. Its effect was tremendous, and little more was said in Parliament in favor of intervention, or recognition of the Confederacy. Thus through the combined efforts of Harriet and Lincoln, the gravest danger to the Union cause was averted. Neither, perhaps, could have accomplished it alone.

But there was one thing about that White House interview that vaguely troubled Harriet. The President had called her "the little lady who made this big war." Was this only one of his pleasantries or had he meant it? Could it be that her book, published nearly ten years before, was

now sending her son, and thousands of other mothers' sons, to danger and death? The thought was unbearable, and she took refuge in her belief that God, not she, had written the book.

The one bright spot in those dark days was the glorious expectancy of the New Year, for it would bring the signing of that document to make the slaves "now, henceforth and forever free."

Harriet and Calvin went to Boston to attend the jubilee planned to mark the signing of the Proclamation. January 1, 1863, was clear and mild. They walked to Music Hall, and took an inconspicuous place in the balcony.

It was three o'clock, and as yet no word had come from Washington. The doubters were saying, "I told you so! He doesn't mean to sign." A musical program was presented. Mr. Emerson read a poem. Still the people waited. The orchestra retired for an intermission, and the crowd buzzed anxiously.

At four o'clock a man strode out upon the stage, and the noise was quickly stilled. "Ladies and gentlemen!" he cried. "The telegraph has just brought word from Washington. The President has *signed*, and the Emancipation—"

A roar from the vast audience drowned out the rest. People sprang to their feet, cheering and clapping, throwing hats into the air. Harriet's bonnet was knocked off, and rested on her shoulders. She applauded until her gloves split, and tears rolled down her cheeks, unheeded. This was the hour for which she had been praying and waiting all her life!

Then, through the tumult, she was dimly aware of voices calling her name. She was startled, for at that moment she had forgotten she was a national figure. She was thinking only of the slaves, of all the good, humble, sorrowing Negroes she had known, and of that gaunt, weary man, that great-hearted man in Washington, who had kept his promise.

The voices grew louder, more insistent. "Mrs. Stowel Mrs. Stowel!" What could they want of her now, when they should be cheering this dawn of Freedom, and Mr. Lincoln? But the crowd in the balcony shifted, friendly hands pointed her out, and urged her forward. Moving as one in a dream, she made her way to the railing, and looked down upon a sea of faces, upturned and smiling. Arms were thrown high; the cheering rocked the hall.

The British ovations had been meaningless compared to this. These were her own countrymen, her people, paying tribute to her as one who had helped bring about this glorious hour. "I am not worthy," she thought. "I have been but the humble instrument in the hands of God, for achieving His great purpose."

Harriet bowed, tried to smile, then, blinded by happy tears, she leaned against the railing and buried her face in her hands.

It was the greatest moment of her life. The slaves' chains were broken. And the dream of an odd little girl, on an Independence Day so long ago, had finally come true. She had done something for her country—and for Liberty.

E P I L O G U E

WHEN the war had ended, and Lincoln's untimely death plunged the nation into mourning, Harriet was personally grief-stricken. But from that grief was born the resolve to renew her efforts on behalf of the Negroes. The freed slaves were bewildered, helpless, unprepared for their new life and the duties of citizenship. Lincoln, she knew, had had wise plans for them, but now others must see to carrying these out. She resolved to establish Negro schools and missions in the South.

Accordingly, she bought a plantation and a fruit farm on the St. Johns River near Mandarin, Florida, and with no thought of unpleasant consequences, invaded the deep South, where her name had been so hated and reviled in recent years. But there she was greeted, if not with love, at least with unfailing courtesy and respect.

To Harriet, Florida was a revelation—a paradise where she could bask in the sun, sail on the river, drive along roads of white sand, and revel in the beauty of flowers and palms and live oaks festooned with Spanish moss. So entranced was she by this new fairyland, she spent all her

winters there, and became one of Florida's first promoters, urging all her family and friends to join her. In addition to her own husband and children, Eunice Beecher and her son came down, as did Brother Charles.

With a staff of Negro servants and the efficient twins to relieve her of all domestic cares, Harriet was free to sketch and paint, and write. And write she did—about Florida, about home-making, but most of all, about New England, the old, half-forgotten New England of her childhood. Drawing on Calvin's store of reminiscences, and her own, she produced two volumes of sketches and tales: *Oldtown Folks* and *Poganuc People*. The Stowes enjoyed writing these, and critics have pronounced them the finest of Harriet's works.

When Professor Stowe retired, the Stone Cabin was no longer his, and Harriet was free to return to Hartford and build her Dream House in the oak grove of hallowed memory. She called it Oakholm. It was a semi-Tudor mansion with eight gables, and a conservatory. But the cost was ruinous; it was too big, and the new-fangled central-heating system wouldn't heat. That didn't matter so much after the Stowes discovered Florida; but the noisy factories soon crowded in about it, blackening the gables and polluting the river nearby. So Harriet sold her Dream House at great financial loss, and with few regrets. She had had the fun of building it, anyway, and had kept her girlhood vow.

The Stowes then bought a smaller house in a better part of Hartford, where they had congenial next-door neighbors—authors Charles Dudley Warner and Mark Twain,

Hartford was home to Harriet. The Female Seminary was still thriving, and although Georgiana May was gone, Sister Mary Perkins was there, and Sister Isabella, who became prominent in the Woman Suffrage movement.

Henry Ward, also a Suffrage advocate, was firmly entrenched in Brooklyn, in a new brownstone mansion. He *did* write his novel, titled *Norwood*, but its success was slight. He had it dramatized, but the play was a dismal failure. Henry laughed it off. He was still a good journalist and orator, and the most popular clergyman in America. Had he not been privileged to raise the Stars and Stripes anew over Fort Sumter?

Henry honestly believed he had won the war by means of his lecture tour of England, during which his oratory and magnetic charm had quelled many a hissing mob. True, England's aid to the Confederacy had ceased soon after, but far more likely as the result of Harriet's earlier *Appeal*.

Kate returned at last to Hartford, to head, for a time, the Seminary she had founded. For forty years she had travelled in the interests of education, hounding Congressmen, promoting plans for teachers' welfare, including unemployment insurance and pensions, raising endowments, and establishing schools and teachers' colleges as far west as Iowa. Kate never had a home, and was always poor, for she spent her money in "doing good."

Calvin Stowe had retired with the intention of writing a tremendous book about the origins of the Bible. He had been collecting material for years. But the indolent old Professor spent his time in happily browsing through moun-

tainous stacks of ancient, musty volumes, and did little writing. Harriet at last conspired with the publisher to hasten this lifetime labor by snatching away each page as it was written, and setting it in type. Thus Calvin was prodded into completing his monumental book, and became a noted author in his own right.

At sixty-one, Harriet found a new career—that of an entertainer for a Lyceum Bureau. Giving public readings from her books, she toured the country for two seasons, appearing as far west as Chicago. This amazing new activity was undertaken only because it paid well, and she sorely needed money. At first she was tormented by stage fright, but soon her latent dramatic ability and Beecher power came to her aid, and she was a great success.

She chose dramatic scenes from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and humorous character sketches from the New England stories, doing the Negro and Yankee dialects superbly. But people would not have cared what she read, so long as they could look at her. She became a good trouper, and despite the discomforts of travel, enjoyed the tours. She declared it the easiest way she had ever tried to earn money. Only Calvin's ill-health ended her new-found career.

The last great public honor which came to Harriet was a Garden Party in celebration of her seventieth birthday. It was given her by the staff of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the magazine which she had helped establish. The Governor of Massachusetts opened his home for this event, and the most distinguished persons in America attended. Many others sent letters of praise, or poems of tribute. Harriet

rose to express thanks, and suddenly found herself making the only speech of her life, about the thing nearest her heart—the future of the American Negro.

Henry Ward also made a speech, in which he paid tribute to their mother, Roxana, and declared that Harriet, more than any of the family, resembled her in graces of mind and spirit. This pleased Harriet more than all the flowery praises of her writing skill.

After the death of Calvin Stowe in 1886, Harriet withdrew from the world, and lived quietly with her faithful twin daughters, her cats, birds, books, and flowers. In July, 1896, when she was eighty-five, the last flame flickered out. Her children laid her to final rest at Andover, between Calvin Stowe and Henry, her eldest son.

THE GREAT Victorian era was nearly over, and one of its greatest women was gone. To the new generation, the boys and girls pedalling through Hartford streets on their bicycles, Harriet Beecher Stowe was only a name on the cover of a book—a legend known to few.

Yet for two generations Harriet Beecher Stowe had been acknowledged the First Lady of American Letters. She had written, in all, thirty volumes, some of which are still ranked as masterpieces. They were of every sort: novels, stories and sketches, essays, textbooks, children's books, travels, biographies, sermonettes, poems, hymns, journalistic pieces, open letters, and household articles. Her influence on the American home was greater than that of any woman of

the Nineteenth Century. She started the trend which has led to the many modern magazines on better and more beautiful homes and gardens, child training, and family life.

Of her novels, some were better written than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but none compared with it in popularity. It remains the fourth-best seller of all time, and perhaps the most widely read work of fiction ever written. At the close of the century, it was still selling thousands of copies each year, and had undergone thirty-one translations. The plays based on it became a standard form of entertainment, performed by countless touring companies from coast to coast. But neither these, nor the translations, ever brought Harriet a penny.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is more than a story about slavery, more than a mighty lever that lifted a race from bondage. Its quality is unique. It sprang, almost unbidden, from the depths of a powerful emotion—from a sensitive mind and heart deeply impressed in childhood with a horror of cruelty and wrong, and a great love of lowly people and simple things. Its humble author had, by some miracle, found the key to the hearts of all humanity, and her spectacular rise from self-effacing shyness and obscure poverty to world-wide fame and influence was one of the greatest of all true Cinderella stories.

